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UTHER·

·A·STUDY·OF·REFORMATION·

Hugh C. Wallace,
Bristol.

MARTIN LUTHER

A STUDY OF REFORMATION

BY

EDWIN D. MEAD

BOSTON
GEO. H. ELLIS, 141 FRANKLIN STREET
1884

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1883.

TO THE MEMORY

OF

THEODORE PARKER,

AND

TO MY FRIEND

WILLIAM M. SALTER,

AT WHOSE INSTANCE IT IS WRITTEN,

THIS SLIGHT BUT EARNEST WORD

IS DEDICATED.

"To what end do we learn of past ages, why praise or why blame? Let us remember Luther's method of thought, his plain hints and his strong truths, and let us apply them to our own times."

HERDER.

"Since the world delights in lies, many will say that I retracted my teachings before I died. I therefore desire most earnestly that you will be witnesses to my present confession of faith. I say it with a good conscience, that I have taught from out of God's Word, according to God's command, to which work He has constrained me without my will. I have taught right and wholesome doctrine concerning faith and love, the cross and the sacraments, and other articles of Christian truth. Many accuse me of being too violent and severe in writing against papists and factious spirits, and when I castigate their false teachings, impious living, and hypocrisy. I have indeed been very violent at times, and have severely attacked my opponents, and yet in such a manner that I never regretted it. But, whether I have been violent or temperate, I have never sought to inflict an injury nor to endanger a human soul, but have rather sought the welfare and salvation of every one."

LUTHER.

MARTIN LUTHER: A STUDY OF REFORMATION.

I.

On the wall of the New Museum at Berlin there are six great frescos, each an historical allegory, by means of which Kaulbach has sought to set before us the course of civilization. The first represents the dispersion of mankind at Babel; the last is the Era of the Reformation. The painter has endeavored, in this last great work, following the high precedent of Raphael in his "School of Athens," to impress upon us, by his art, the sweep and character of that whole varied movement which men call the *Renaissance*,— the new birth of the world. This he has done by seizing, with wise instinct, the powerful leaders and representative men in the realms of scholarship and art, of science and discovery, war, literature, politics and religion, and whatever contributed in that notable era to the emancipation and

enlargement of the human mind, and so grouping them in relation to each other and to a central truth as to teach us by a glance the deep organic unity of that crowded history, and how men and societies — thinking often little of each other, and through activities so different — were all subservient to a common end.

Here are the great Humanists — Mirandola, Petrarch, Reuchlin, Erasmus, Thomas More; here Leonardo, Raphael, and Michael Angelo; here Bruno and Bacon, Shakspere, Cervantes and Hans Sachs; here Copernicus, Galileo and Columbus; here is Gutenberg, with hand upraised, as scattering the new thought over the new earth; here are the Saxon Electors, William the Silent, Elizabeth, Gustavus — the princes who backed the new thought with the power of the State; here is that brilliant galaxy of "Reformers before the Reformation" — Wiclif, "the morning star," Arnold of Brescia, Peter Waldo, Savonarola, John Huss; and here are Calvin, Zwingli, and Melanchthon. But towering above these, the centre of the whole great company, the point to which all tend and from which all radiate, stands the mighty figure of Martin Luther, ıg high above his head the open Bible.

e painter did his work with a true instinct.

It was not a better edition of Plato and a better grammar; it was not better statues and more human madonnas; it was not better plays and poems, not better theories of the stars and of the ocean,—it was none of these things which was principal in that work of the new birth of the world; but it was the new birth of the soul, the reformation of religion. And, in the story of the Reformation, Martin Luther must ever be the central figure. "No nice criticism of temper or motive," says one, "no new discovery of the worth of other men, can dispossess him of that honorable rank. His name has been for more than three centuries the representative name of the great religious movement, and it will continue to be forever. It may be shown that Melanchthon was more learned, that Carlstadt was more zealous, that Zwingli was purer, that Calvin was more severely logical; but Luther will still stay as the Achilles of the host which made war upon Rome. His life will be an epitome of the history of reform. All the rest, to gain significance, must be grouped around him. He is as central and essential as the figure of the Christ in the picture of the 'Last Supper.'"

Undoubtedly, Luther is the most influential and significant man in the spiritual history of

mankind since Christ. Upon no other has so much devolved. Athanasius, standing against the world and maintaining that God was genuinely in one man, that one at least was not a machine, is not a figure so imposing. The failure of no other, since the time when Christ, hearing the howl of the mob that waited for his blood, answered the priest's "Art thou the Son of God?" with firm "I am," and the satrap's "Art thou then a king?" with calm, "Thou sayest," nor deigning, for the sake of life, to profane by explanation the truth which, to every uncorrupted soul, should have been plain and primary,— the failure of no other since that crisis and that triumph in Jerusalem had cost humanity so much as the failure, at any of the great crises of his life, of Martin Luther. "The people, on the morrow, as he went to the Hall of the Diet," says Carlyle, speaking of Luther's appearance at Worms, "crowded the windows and housetops, some of them calling out to him, in solemn words, not to recant. 'Whosoever denieth me before men!' they cried to him,— as in a kind of solemn petition and adjuration. Was it not in reality our petition too, the petition of the whole world, lying in dark bondage of soul, paralyzed under a black spectral Nightmare and triple-hatted

Chimera, calling itself Father in God, and what not: 'Free us; it rests with thee; desert us not!'"

Mr. Froude has said that the appearance of Luther before the Diet of Worms is, perhaps, the very finest scene in human history. Carlyle, at any rate, is safe in saying that it is "the greatest scene in Modern European History." "It is," he says, "the greatest moment in the Modern History of Men. English Puritanism, England and its Parliaments, Americas, and vast work these two centuries; French Revolution, Europe and its work everywhere at present,—the germ of it all lay there; had Luther in that moment done other, it had all been otherwise!"

And, indeed, it were difficult to conjure up a spectacle more dramatic, a collision sharper, than that presented by this Diet of Worms. Never, perhaps, had there been a more imposing gathering of dignities for the purpose of overawing a simple man. And this in a day when dignities and authorities had a sanctity and a terror of which it is impossible for our time even to conceive. "Little monk," said George of Frundsberg, touching Luther on the shoulder as he passed through the ante-room into the Diet, "thou hast work before thee

that I and many a man whose trade is war never faced the like of." The ashes of Huss and Jerome had floated down the river on whose banks the Diet met, for words far less defiant and acts far less flagrant than those which Luther came to answer for, and the bishops and archbishops in whose presence he now stood were all of the opinion that the stake was the only fitting place for so insolent a heretic. His friends had reminded him of Huss, and most of them viewed his entry into Worms as equivalent to commitment to the flames.* At the very city gates, he was urged back by still more earnest warnings. "Were there as many devils in Worms as there are tiles on the roofs," he replied, "I would on." "Though they should kindle a fire as high as heaven between Wittenberg and Worms," he had said on the way, "yet would I go and appear in the name of the Lord." And there he stands in the dreadful presence. There is

*"To a heretic," urged the Church authorities, "one is under no obligation, either to grant a safe-conduct or to keep it." But the emperor replied, "Whatever promise has been made must be fulfilled." A year after the death of Luther, Charles stood at his grave, having entered Wittenberg as victor of the battle of Mühlberg over the forces of the Protestant League of Smalcald. One of his companions endeavored to persuade him to take vengeance upon the dead heretic. "My work with Luther," answered Charles, "is done. I war with the living, not with the dead." How doubly mean, beside this noble rebuke, appears the spiteful dealing with the ashes of Wiclif by the Church!

the emperor, hard and hostile, with his retinue of Spanish priests and lords, and the assembled princes of Germany, "before whom the poor peasantry had been taught to tremble as beings of another nature from themselves"; and there "the legate of the dreaded power which had broken the spirit of princes and emperors"; the bishops and archbishops, in their trappings; the dukes and barons, with their stern, unsympathetic faces. "The world's pomp and power," says Carlyle, "sits there on this hand; on that, stands up for God's Truth one man, the poor miner Hans Luther's son."

Well, he did not fail us. The exultant shout of the crowd that received him as he came out of the hall was the witness to how he had kept the faith. One voice was heard above the rest: "Blessed be the mother that bore thee!" Fire had no terrors to this man,— no lack of courage there. He lived continually in a presence far more august than that of emperor or pope. Gold and rubies, purple and fine-twined linen, coronets and mitres,— these had long lost their power to impose upon him. He knew well how they are put together, and he looked on every man as he is in his nakedness. The voice at Worms was the same as the voice at Wittenberg: "Prove to me that I am wrong, and I

submit. Till then, my conscience binds me. *Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. So help me God!*"

This scene there in the Diet of Worms is a miniature and epitome of Luther's life. We find in scene after scene in those familiar dramatic chapters of his life essentially the same elements and the same collision,— the collision of a mighty individual bound by conscience with the prestige and the forces of tradition and authority. Always the world's pomp and power stands there on this hand; on that, stands up for God's truth one man. So it is in that memorable act of the thirty-first day of October, 1517, that All Saints' Eve from which the Reformation dates. The scene in the Diet of Worms itself is scarcely more impressive than that scene at Wittenberg,— Luther alone at evening walking resolutely through the town, and with his own hand nailing his ninety-five theses against indulgences to the church door. "Please God," I think we hear him say through his set teeth, as his hammer rings in the evening air, "please God, this shall beat a hole in Tetzel's drum." He knew next to nothing of the significance of his act. He simply nailed his theses to the door and went in to evening service, as he went in yesterday

and yesterday. He never thought that perchance he was a hero. He would have been amazed, had he been told that he was doing the most memorable thing that had been done for fifteen centuries. He was amazed, when presently he learned of the publicity which his act had attained. He had simply thought, Here and now is a wrong and a lie, and here and now in Wittenberg I will crush it. And, lo! before another sun goes down, thousands of pilgrims, returning to their homes, are dispersing the doctrine over Saxony; in a fortnight, the theses, translated into the common tongue, are flying through every part of Germany; and, before the month has passed, they are read at Rome.

The story goes — it is a fond story among the Germans, and, mythical or not, is a good parable — that on that evening of All Saints, just after the theses were posted on the church door, Frederick the Elector lay at his castle of Scheinitz, six leagues distant; and, as he was pondering how to keep the festival, he fell asleep, and dreamed that he saw the monk writing certain propositions on the chapel of the castle at Wittenberg, in so large a hand that it could be read at Scheinitz. The pen began to expand, as he looked, and gradually

grew longer and longer, till at last it reached to Rome, touched the Pope's triple crown, and made it totter. He inquired of the monk where he had got such a pen, and was answered that it once belonged to the wing of a goose in Bohemia. Presently, other pens sprang out of the great pen, and all seemed busy writing. A loud noise was heard, and Frederick awoke. The hundred years had revolved, and Huss's saying had come true: "To-day, you burn a goose.* A hundred years hence, a swan shall arise, whom you will not be able to burn."

The same collision which we see in the Diet of Worms we see also again in the Diet of Augsburg, whither Luther was summoned before the papal legate, Cajetan, just a year after the publication of his theses, and three years before the greater diet. The Diet of Augsburg seems indeed a sort of dress rehearsal for the Diet of Worms,— the same accusation, the same defence, the same threatening, the same result. What Luther afterward wrote to his friend, Lucas Cranach, about his experience at Worms he might as well have written now of his experience at Augsburg: "I supposed they would have assembled some fifteen doctors

*The meaning of the Bohemian name *Huss*. This saying explains the swan often seen engraved over German pictures of Luther.

or so, and have overcome the monk by argument; but no, nothing of the sort. 'Are the books yours?' 'Yes.' 'Will you revoke or not?' 'No.' 'Get you gone, then!' Oh, what children we are, to let the Roman apes befool us in this way!"* The papal legate found, to his amazement, that the criminal whom he had summoned to his bar was turning the tables, and forcing him to justify himself. Having begun by browbeating the monk, he evidently ended by being afraid of him. "I can dispute no longer with this beast," he said: "it has deep-set eyes and wonderful thoughts in its head."† His demand for retraction was met by the demand for evidence of error. His statement that the pope had sanctioned the indulgences was met by the assertion that the pope had no right to sanction them. Luther appealed "from the pope ill-informed to the pope to-be-better-informed": "As to the retraction which you require of me with such

*"If the pope could bring against me only one such argument as the Jews had against Jeremiah and other prophets," said Luther, "it were not possible for me to subsist. But the pope disputes with me not according to justice and equity, but with the sword and his power. He uses no written law, but club law. If I had no other argument against the pope than *de facto*, I would instantly hang myself; but my dispute is *jus*." "I cry," he said, "Gospel! Gospel! and they answer, Usage! Usage!"

†"Luther's eyes," wrote one who knew him, "were black and deep-set, lightening and sparkling like the stars, so that one could hardly look at them for any length of time."

pertinacity, my conscience will not permit me to give it; and there is nothing in the world, neither command nor counsel, nor the voice of friendship, nor of mere prudence, which could induce me to act against my conscience." "I will retract when you show me what I have said contrary to the gospel of Christ. Answer my arguments, and I will obey your commandment."

This, we see, is precisely the same thing as the Diet of Worms. "Think you that the pope cares for the opinions of Germany?" cried Cajetan's messenger. "Think you that the princes will take up arms for you? And, if not, where will you be?" "Under heaven," Luther answered; and one midnight, heeding the warnings of his friends, and knowing well that it was useless to prolong this farce of a discussion, he escaped through a postern, and quietly rode off, beneath the stars, to Wittenberg. Already, Rome had issued preliminary notice of the bull of excommunication against him; and that was equivalent to a price upon his head.

Another picture of this one man, the miner's son, standing up for God's truth against the world's pomp and power! It is the 10th of December, 1520. The famous bull which sepa-

rated Martin Luther from the communion of the faithful, and declared him a heretic, infamous and accursed, has arrived in Wittenberg. Sixty days were given the reformer to burn all his books and retract, or come to Rome and confess his sins. Otherwise, he and all his friends were to be treated as heretics, according to the ancient method. The ancient method, friends! Oh, that ancient method! You think, perhaps, that ancient method differed from the modern one somewhat as the ass's back differs from the parlor car. Well, it was surely less elegant; but it was more expeditious. The ancient method with heretics — and the modern method! What is the modern method? What is the modern penalty for protestantism? What did you ever suffer, friend, for any opposition of yours to the popular religion, or for any word or act of yours in behalf of any unpopular truth? Well, I suppose that you had to endure the disapproval and the frown of uncle's wife; I suppose that Mrs. Grundy got out a little bull about you,— and I do not underestimate the virus and the poignancy, in instances, of social and family persecution,— I have said some things on that point, in my life, and propose to say more; I suppose, too, that, if you are a

public functionary of any sort, you have even stood in the pillory of the religious newspapers, so called,— truly a terrible ordeal. But the ancient method, my friend! Ah, I must say that I am sometimes inclined to think very poorly of my generation, when I note the exceedingly small price for which men are willing to sell their manhood and compromise with what to them is no longer honest gospel, and when I hear the petty whines of men over the petty losses and annoyances they suffer for refusing to hiss some established shibboleth. O men and women, what would become of your gospel, if it, too, had to face its age of martyrdom, like other gospels, and it became a question of exile, of torture, and the stake? Poor stuff for martyrs, these weak compromisers and complainers of ours! Not of such stuff were those Puritans of England made, and our Pilgrim Fathers. Not of such stuff was Martin Luther. This man afraid of uncle's wife counting her beads in the Thuringer Wald, or of that other cosseting the parish priest in Franconia! This man afraid of Wittenberg West End! This man afraid of the editor of the Leipzig *Relationes Semestrales!* Ah, my dear, tremulous friend, the exceeding great humor of it! Just

as little fear had he of the ancient method. Afraid of Dr. Eck and the pope of Rome! Why, he had slept with the Devil himself under his bed and in the chimney for twenty years, and learned to look him out of countenance,—and this not the devil of our "New Orthodoxy," written with a small *d* or with no *d* at all, but the genuine Devil of your grandfather, as personal as the pope. Afraid of the stake! Why, for twenty years, his soul had wrestled for its salvation with the powers of darkness, at the very mouth of hell. What were a moment in the flames of the inquisitors to a man like this, forever in view of the unquenchable fire? A bull of excommunication from the pope of Rome! Well, it meant very much more, as you perceive, than a deposition by the Pittsburg Presbytery. No wonder that men in Germany didn't care to be caught with Luther's books on their premises, true as they might believe them to be, and began to burn them up. I suppose that men said to him now just as they had said when he first began to preach against the indulgences: "What are you about? They won't allow it." "What if they *must* allow it?" he had answered then; and now he said to the doctors and students of the University, "Come with me to

the Elster gate." Already, while the bull was on its way, he had issued a pamphlet upon "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church," which was in the hands of all the people. "I hear," he said in this, "that the papal anathemas are ready to be hurled against me, to compel me to recant. If that be true, then I wish that this little book be considered a part of my future recantation; and, in a little while, I will issue a recantation, by the help of Christ, the like of which the Roman court has hitherto not seen nor heard." In solemn march, he now led the procession without the city gate, followed by a vast crowd of the townspeople, to where a great pile of fagots had been raised in readiness. The fire was put to the pile, and Luther cast the papal bull into the flames; and not the bull only, but the laws of the Church of Rome, the Decretals, the Clementines, the Extravagants, the accumulation of the ages, together with the writings of Eck and Emser, his great opponents in Germany. A clean sweep of it this time! "As thou hast vexed the saints of God," he cried, as he cast in the bull, "so mayest thou be consumed in eternal fire!" Excommunication! Well, if it must be, then let it be done in right order. If books are to be burned, let it not be books of God's Bible in the making, but

books of untruth, pestiferous, cumbrous, decaying books. If it has become a question of offensive and defensive, then keep superstition forever in the wrong, degrade not truth by making it apologetic and a beggar, suffer not life and hope and prophecy to cringe for their credentials to bombast and corruption and old clothes. Ah, it is a melancholy thing to see men who are called to be prophets of the soul hiccoughing for dread of the orthodoxies of the city, and bothered about how they shall appear to the establishments. Bulls of orthodoxies! Why, burn them up. Establishments! Excommunicate them, till they show fruits meet for repentance, by virtue of the living sovereign truth that resides in you, if so be there is any sovereign truth in you, and you have reliably found it out. "Our dealing and proceeding against the pope," said Luther, "is altogether excommunication, which is simply the public declaration that a person is disobedient to Christ's Word. Now, we affirm in public that the pope and his retinue believe not: therefore, we conclude that he shall not be saved, but be damned. What is this but to excommunicate him?" In a word, belief in a lie, not belief in the truth,— this is what excommunicates a man from whatever in this world is worth having communion with or

whatever any of us need have any concern about. No genuine man was ever hurt yet by any bull of any orthodoxy, and excommunication of an honest prophet only lifts him into the closer communion of the saints. "From the year of our Lord 1520 to the present time," said Luther, cheerfully, late in life, "every Maundy Thursday, at Rome, I have been by the pope excommunicated and cast into hell. For every year, on Maundy Thursday, all heretics are excommunicated at Rome, among whom I am always put first and chief. Yet I still live." It was on the 10th of December, 1520, that Luther excommunicated the pope, and publicly proclaimed in this modern world that in things of religion it is safe and chiefly advisable for a man to stand on his own feet. Just a hundred years from that day,— as you who like to mark, as I do, the striking coincidences of history, will note with interest,— our Pilgrim Fathers were in Plymouth harbor, ready to land on the morrow morning to found this New World commonwealth.

II.

I think no man has ever lived whose life is more dramatic than the life of Luther, none who takes a stronger hold upon the imagination, no more striking personality. From first to last, a continual succession of great and beautiful pictures, that transfix the painter and the poet. We see the poor boy, singing carols in the street for his bread, and kindly taken in by Frau Ursula Cotta; we see the student, thrilled by the old Latin Bible discovered in the university library at Erfurt; we see the monk, now tortured by self-condemnation and now enraptured by a saving faith; we see the bachelor of arts, lecturing on philosophy at Wittenberg; we see the pilgrim, wrathful and appalled at the mockeries and the worldliness of Rome; we see the fearless and defiant Protestant, disputing with doctors and diets; we see the hidden scholar of the Wartburg, translating the Bible into the language of the people; we see the mighty preacher in the pulpit; we see the statesman, dealing with princes and with revolutions; we see the tender husband and father, loving his sweet German home, his human heart all broken as he kneels beside the coffin of his child; we see

the faithful friend, bright centre of that bright and faithful company of scholars; we see the great man among men, loved of the people, one with the people, singing with them, speaking their speech, simple as they, eating and drinking, glad to see the springtime coming and to hear the birds, glad in all gladness and beauty, ministering to sickness and to every sorrow,—a heart responsive to every note in nature and in man, a big, impulsive, overflowing soul, humorous, hilarious, courageous, superstitious, scrupulous, reckless, a bigot, a poet, vulgar, charitable, a clap of thunder, a very mother in sympathy and providence, his foibles and his virtues all so human and so plain,—no wonder that the German people have taken this colossus into their hearts and set up his image everywhere, father of their Church, father of their literature, pillar of their learning and corner-stone of their schools, patron saint of their festivities, guardian of their liberties and idol of their homes.*

* "Luther possessed qualities that we seldom see associated,—nay, that we usually find in the sharpest antagonism. He was at once a dreamy mystic and a practical man of action. His thoughts had not only wings, but also hands. He spoke and he acted: he was not only the tongue, but also the sword of his time. He was both a cold, scholastic word-sifter, and an inspired, God-drunk prophet. After a long day spent in laboriously working out dogmatic distinctions, at evening time he would take his flute and go out to gaze at the stars, and his soul would dissolve in melody and devotion. This same man, who could scold like a fish-wife, could also be as gentle as a

How the very spirit of the nation seems to be behind the hand of the German artist, who, like Gustav König in his way, outlines for us the moving panorama of this life! Few books have power to bring us so close to the man Luther as such pictures. There is no adequate book, it seems to me, upon the life of Luther,—no book like Carlyle's upon the life of Frederick. The life by Köstlin is a monument of learning, industry, faithfulness and justice,—a book to be profoundly grateful for, but not an inspired book, not prophetic. There is no English life of Luther which is even respectable. It is singular that English-

sensitive maiden. He was often as fierce as the storm that uproots the oak-tree, and then again he was as mild as the breeze that caresses the violet. He was full of the awful reverence of God, full of self-sacrificing devotion to the Holy Spirit, he could lose himself entirely in pure spirituality. And yet he was fully acquainted with the glories of this earth; he knew how estimable they are: it was his lips that uttered the famous maxim,—

'*Wer liebt nicht Wein, Weib, und Gesang,*
Der bleibt ein Narr sein Leben lang.'

He was a complete man, I might say an absolute man, in whom there was no discord between matter and spirit. To call him a spiritualist, therefore, would be as erroneous as to call him a sensualist. How shall I describe him? He had in him something primordial, incomprehensible, miraculous, such as we find in all providential men; something naïvely terrible, something boorishly wise, something lofty yet circumscribed, something invincible and inspired."—*Heine.*

One notable way in which Luther's large compass and wealth of nature appear is his love of beauty and of art, and his clear appreciation of their functions, at a time when most of the reformers maintained here an attitude of indifference or of pronounced hostility. "I am not of the opinion," he said, "that all the arts should be suppressed by the gospel, and

men, who write the best biographies, who have even given Germany great lives of Lessing, of Goethe, and of Stein, have never turned to this most magnetic, profound, and picturesque of lives. Yet, perhaps, there has been but one man among us, who was fully fitted, by nature and by culture, for so great a work. More and more, I think, we shall have reason to deplore that Carlyle did not give to Luther half of those fifteen weary years which he bestowed upon the *Frederick*, which had been twice as good, if but half as long. Surely, the most pregnant and valuable words which have yet been written upon Luther are those few pages in *Heroes and Hero-Worship*.

should perish, as several high ecclesiastics maintain; but I would rather that all the arts, especially music, should be enlisted in the service of Him who has created them and bestowed them upon us." He was himself warmly devoted to music, even wrote a treatise on the art; and the chorals which he composed are still commonly sung in Germany. Händel confessed that he derived advantage from studying his scores. He prepared a hymn-book for the use of the Protestant congregations, and he was as truly the father of Protestant church song as of Protestant doctrine. His own poems, "the hymns that budded forth in his soul amidst the conflicts and troubles of his days, oftentimes resemble," says Heine, "a flower blooming on a bare rock; oftentimes, they are like a moonbeam shimmering across a tossing sea. A true war-song was that defiant lay '*Eine feste Burg*,'—the Marseillaise Hymn of the Reformation."

III.

We are celebrating at this time the four hundredth birthday of Martin Luther. In ten thousand places, men have gathered in these days to join in that sacramental service. I do not know that birthdays are the worthiest and most didactic days to celebrate, in connection with the life of any man. There is nothing more accidental and characterless in the life of any of us than birth and death. Birthdays commemorate the fate side of a man. Much more inspiring is it to commemorate the side of freedom and of personality. Much more than any birthday, if you will see it, is the anniversary of some heroic choice of yours, of some revolutionary vision, of some gracious touching of God's finger, which created a new soul within you and a new heaven and a new earth about you. It was on such a day, you feel, that the soul of you first got fairly born at all; and from such days that what is honorable, significant and distinctive in you really dates. The birthdays of the soul, the anniversaries of great and public deeds,—these are the fittest festivals. To the Brown family, it is important, doubtless, that one John Brown was born May 9, 1800, at Torrington, Con-

necticut. To us and to himself, John Brown was born when twelve years old, when he saw a negro boy, fully his equal, beaten with iron shovels,— and was by this first led to reflect upon the hopeless wretchedness of slaves, and to raise the question, "Is God their Father?" The real Newton was born, not under Charles, but under Cromwell. And it is not so important to determine whether Columbus made a slip in writing himself down forty-eight in 1503, since, for the world, Columbus was born when, at Porto Santo, the idea burst in upon him that he could and would sail due west on the round earth and come to land. The real Luther, too, was born, not just four hundred years ago, but on the 17th of July, 1505, when, rising from the company of convivial and rollicking students in some *Auerbach's Keller*, at Erfurt, he knocks at midnight at the door of the old Augustinian convent. "Open, in God's name," said he. "What do you want?" replied the porter. "To consecrate myself to God." "Amen!" answered the brother; and he passed beneath the portal. That were a day worthy to commemorate,— a great birthday of the soul. The day commemorated by the German people, year by year, is not Luther's birthday, but that Octo-

ber 31, that All Saints' Eve, when he nailed his ninety-five theses to the church door. That is Reformation Day, and the great Luther day in Germany. And this is well, for the Reformation and the public significance of the man Luther really date from that memorable act. Be that day forever kept sacred! When the New Faith comes to clear self-consciousness, and can heartily and sincerely institute, that day shall be a bright one in its calendar, rich in its perennial possibilities of inspiration and of education from the great life which we celebrate to-day. Yet would I certainly not criticise that impulse by which men everywhere are celebrating now this four hundredth birthday. Much rather do we all rejoice in it, and in every occasion which may draw us closer to Luther for a moment, and serve to direct men's studies afresh to his character and services. And, laying stress on that divine Necessity, upon which Luther himself laid greater stress than upon any fact of Freedom, we consider that at this time, four hundred years ago, God set the child Luther in this world, to train for his predestined work. At Eisleben in Saxony, among the foothills of the Harz Mountains, he was born; and, at the end, he came back there, from Wittenberg, to die. The tradition

is that his parents had gone to Eisleben to attend a fair, when their son was unexpectedly born on the eve of St. Martin. Yet good antiquarians contend that he was not born here at all — but at Mansfeld, rather. It is the story of Nazareth and Bethlehem again.

IV.

Four hundred years ago! What did the sun of that November, 1483, which looked down into the cradle of Martin Luther, see else, as it coursed over the world, from Cathay to the Azores? From Cathay,—for Marco Polo had found it and brought back the news, two centuries before, and Christian missionaries were already in Pekin; to the Azores,—for they had found their way into the map a hundred years before. These were the limits of the vision of the boy Luther's sun, in its daily journey; for the sun of Moses and of Homer still made its daily journey, and should keep up the custom yet for sixty years. Copernicus was ten years old in 1483, learning his Greek and Latin in the old Polish city just beyond the German border. Luther outlived him long enough to read his book, and pronounce it damnable heresy. I do not doubt that Canon Copernicus,

beloved of the bishops, himself candidate for the mitre, noting the successive emanations from Wittenberg and Worms, had been reciprocally complimentary. America, in 1483, did not yet exist; but strange premonitions of it are just beginning to trouble Columbus there in Spain. Ferdinand and Isabella are chiefly busy now in driving out the Moors and getting the Inquisition well established. Torquemada became the first inquisitor-general of Spain in this very year, 1483,—and the general *auto-da-fé* which at once ensued betokened how rife heresy had already become.

In Italy, in 1483, Savonarola enters the convent of San Marco, and is about to begin his work of reformation. The news of his burning, dread augury of the result of conflict with the pope, came into Germany while Martin Luther was living happily with Frau Ursula Cotta, at Eisenach. Italy, in 1483, was the most interesting quarter of the world, the seat of the most elegant culture and of the most varied thought. It was the centre now of the great humanistic movement, of which Reuchlin and Erasmus were the brilliant northern representatives in Luther's time. Reuchlin, in 1483, had just returned to Germany from his studies in Italy with Ficinus and Miran-

dola. This was the era of the great Italian free cities — Genoa, Pisa, Venice, Florence. Lorenzo de' Medici was the head of Florence, and the golden age of Italian art was just beginning. Leonardo da Vinci was thirty years old. Michael Angelo was a schoolboy. Raphael was born in this same year, 1483, that Luther was born, as also, if one wishes to remember it, was Rabelais in France. When Luther made his pilgrimage to Rome, in 1510, if he made his way into the Vatican, as well he may have done, he found Raphael there, painting perhaps his "School of Athens" or his "Reconciliation of Philosophy with Theology," and Michael Angelo immersed in his great frescos in the Sistine Chapel. He certainly saw the walls of St. Peter's Church rising, under Julius II. A long way from Paul, the tent-maker, to Julius of St. Peter's and the Vatican, I suppose he said, in his simplicity,— as far as "from virtue to *virtù*," he might have added, had he learned the phrase. It was for money to forward the building of St. Peter's that Leo sent his pardon peddlers into Germany. It is interesting to remember the function of St. Peter's in precipitating Luther's revolt and the Reformation. "The cost of St. Peter's," observes Heine, "was to be defrayed

by this very sale of indulgences, vice being thus made contributory to the erection of the edifice, which thereby became a kind of monument of sensual desire, like the pyramid of Rhodope, constructed by an Egyptian courtesan from the profits of prostitution. Of this house of God, it may with more justice be asserted, than of the cathedral of Cologne, that it was built by the devil."

In 1483, Sixtus IV. was pope, trying to rouse Europe against the Turks. Sultan Mohammed had captured Constantinople and overthrown the Eastern Empire just thirty years before the birth of Luther; and, all through Luther's life, the Turks were pressing into Central Europe, sometimes almost to the walls of Vienna, threatening to put an end to Western civilization altogether. If there is one word which sums up all that was appalling to the European world into which Luther was born, that word is *Turk*. The unspeakable Turk played a part in the general theology itself second only to Satan, just as to the Protestants, in the impending conflict, he was outranked in horror only by Satan and the pope. The Dutch "sea-beggars," who swept down to raise the siege of Leyden, wore crescents in their hats, with the inscription, "Rather Turk-

ish than Popish." When Luther first read the sentences in the Apocalypse about Antichrist, the Man of Sin, the great Whore of Babylon, and the rest, "I did not look toward Rome," he says, "but thought they had been spoken of the Jews or Turks." Afterward, he said, "Antichrist is the pope and the Turk together." And yet the bloody Turk did Luther and the Reformation a good turn. Were it not that the whole energy of the empire was needed to withstand the Turk, Luther and the Protestant princes would certainly not have been allowed to go on with as little bother as they really encountered.

Sixtus IV. was succeeded in the papacy by Innocent VIII., father of seven illegitimate children, all by different women. His apologists claim that there were *only* two children. Perhaps this is why the Church named him Innocent. His original name was John Baptist. He was succeeded by Pope Borgia, that Tiberius among the popes,—of whom there will be something more to say; and he by Pope Piccolomini, called Pius, the twenty-one days' pope; followed, before Luther nailed his theses to the church door, by Julius and Leo, chief priests of *virtù*,—the gospel "By taste are ye saved," a gospel which always has place some-

where, sooner or later, for bills of indulgence and Tetzels.

In Old England, what did the sun see in 1483? In that year 1483, the two princes were murdered in the Tower, and Richard III. became King of England. English freedom was at its lowest ebb. Wiclif had been dead just one hundred years. But John Colet entered Oxford University this year; Thomas More was three years old; and Caxton had just set up his printing-press at Westminster, was printing the *Canterbury Tales* and the old chronicles,— crook-backed Richard himself one of his patrons. It was now thirty years since Gutenberg, on the Rhine, had first "made thought cosmopolite." The *Appeal against the Turks*, of 1454, and the *Letters of Indulgence*, of 1454 and 1455, were the first works, barring a little Latin grammar, which came from his press. The new thought with which the world was throbbing compelled the printing-press to appear. It was the great engine of the Reformation, the timeliest and most providential, if we may say so, of all inventions. It meant freedom and enlightenment. Heine remarks, speaking of Luther throwing his inkstand at the devil, in the Wartburg, "The devil has ever since that day had a great dread of

ink, and above all of printing-ink." The Church opposed the printing-press, just as it opposed Copernicus and Luther. The book is a heretic, the sincere sun is a heretic. I suppose that this Columbian New World, when found, was seen to be a heretic too, and duly anathematized. And the Church's instinct was correct. The alphabet was a foreordained and predestinated heretic; and everything has been a heretic which, in any momentous way, since time began, has advanced knowledge, shed light, or enlarged the borders. "Not to agree with them is heresy," said Erasmus of the priests with whom he had to do. "To know Greek is heresy. To speak good Latin is heresy. Whatever they do not understand is heresy."

The printing-press, the new heavens, the new religion,— Gutenberg, Copernicus, Luther, —surely, Germany, which, in a single century, gave these to the world, may be pardoned for the two centuries of intellectual barrenness which followed them. I should say that the appearance of printed books was the most important phenomenon in Germany at the time when Luther was born into it. In Nuremberg, Albrecht Dürer, the Raphael of Protestantism, was twelve years old; and Hans Sachs, who

became Luther's disciple about the time of the Diet of Worms, and who devoted one of his finest songs to the "Nightingale of Wittenberg,"— Hans Sachs was about to be born. Albrecht Dürer and Hans Sachs we account important phenomena. Kaiser Frederick, the Pacific, was not an important phenomenon. Kaiser Max, who presently succeeded him and reigned till after Luther's hammer rung on the church door, was considerably more important.

These, then, were some of the things beheld by the sun of 1483, which shone upon Martin Luther's cradle. Only do not think that I have meant herein to paint a picture of the Europe of four hundred years ago. I have but catalogued some brilliant names and some famous and dramatic contemporary doings, to make us realize more vividly when it was that this man, Martin Luther, was born into the world, and to indicate some of the hopeful and prophetic factors of the time. But the Europe of four hundred years ago,—who, in brief, shall paint that picture? One part of humanists, painters, academies, printing-presses, and Portuguese navigators; nine parts of feudalism, of tyranny, of slavery, of hopeless poverty and beggary, of superstition unutterable,

and of all that we count degradation. Oh, the nine parts of darkness!

V.

The greatest factor of that time, by far, was the Church. The Church was omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent. The priest was far more present to the people, and more potent, than the State; the pope, a figure far more august and dreadful than the emperor. There was nothing in the life of 1483 in which the Church did not have a finger, where it was not, indeed, the thumb,—nothing from cradle to coronation, or, crossing the border, from heaven to hell. "Amidst all the attacks it sustained," says Ranke, "and all the conquests it achieved,—amidst those incessant conflicts, the decisions of which constantly assumed the character of laws, it not only asserted its claim to universal fitness for all ages and nations, for this world and the next, but to the regulation of the minutest particulars of human life."

I suppose that Luther's great work was this:—he killed the pope. That is what men and women know him for. Ask them what Luther was, and they shall tell you, The leader of Protestantism; and Protestantism is protestantism against popery and the Church of Rome.

I say that Luther killed the pope; for a thing is dead in this world, whenever it is once shown that it has no reason for itself. That is a very true and great word of Hegel's, The real is the rational, and the rational is the real. The first principle of the Universe is Truth. No sham is a reality in this world, sham it ever so bravely, but only that which is genuinely rooted in the primal Reason. If your eye alone sees a truth, and if your logic be good, the whole world shall be compelled to see as you do, storm and stiffen as the whole world may. If a sham is once stabbed by an idea, the wound is mortal, long as the carcass may parade the earth in its ostentatious dying. We need none of us fear that there will ever be a healthy pope again, much as we need to guard the State against the bane of papal spasms. "The cry of 'No Popery,'" says Carlyle, "is foolish enough in these days. The speculation that Popery is on the increase, building new chapels and so forth, may pass for one of the idlest ever started. Very curious: to count up a few Popish chapels, listen to a few Protestant logic-choppings,—to much dull-droning, drowsy inanity, that still calls itself Protestant, and say: See, Protestantism is *dead;* Popism is more alive than it, will be alive after it! Drowsy inanities, not a few, that

call themselves Protestant, are dead; but *Protestantism* has not died yet, that I hear of! Protestantism, if we will look, has in these days produced its Goethe, its Napoleon; German Literature, and the French Revolution,—rather considerable signs of life! Nay, at bottom, what else is alive *but* Protestantism? Popery can build new chapels; welcome to do so to all lengths. Popery cannot come back, any more than Paganism can,—*which* also lingers in some countries. The poor old Popehood will not die away entirely, as Thor has done, for some time yet; nor ought it. The Old never dies till this happen, till all the soul of good that was in it have got itself transfused into the practical New. While a good work remains capable of being done by the Romish form, or, what is inclusive of all, while a *pious life* remains capable of being led by it, just so long, if we consider, will this or the other human soul adopt it, go about as a living witness of it. It lasts here for a purpose. Let it last as long as it can."

But the Papacy and the Holy Catholic Church, as we know them, in their old age, held sharply to the bull-ring by Protestantism and Rationalism, kept on their good behavior by a vigilant public opinion, manifest a very

different spirit from that with which they lorded it over God's heritage in the days of Innocent and Alexander. I do not mean to admit that the Holy Roman Church has got a regenerate or essentially different nature in these latter days. To my mind, Roman Church is Roman Church; and its very genius is opposed to everything that makes for freedom, enlightenment and self-respect in the modern world, to whatever most of us count progress. I do not speak of individuals, Fénelons and Lenormants, or Catholic saints and scholars humbler, but nearer and dearer to us Americans; as learned scholars and as saintly saints have grown in soil much less promising. I do not underrate any philanthropies. I speak of the genius of the Roman Church; and I say it is opposed to what is most hopeful and ennobling in modern thought, opposed especially to those foundation principles of freedom and of science upon which our American State is built, and that it is only by eternal vigilance that it is to be kept from becoming seriously baneful and disastrous to the Commonwealth. Opposed to freedom — as truly, at heart, in politics as in religion. The audacity of the plea for the Roman Church as the friend and nurse of freedom and republics, which we have lately

heard, is almost as astounding as its irony is mirthful. "Since when did the Roman Church become the mirror of republicanism?" asked the orator, yesterday, as he swept through the slaughter fields of its history in England, Germany, France, Spain and the Netherlands. Had the Roman Church had its way there would to-day be no United States, no united Germany, no French Republic, no New Italy, no House of Commons, no Castelar in Spain. Opposed to science — jealous even of having her children taught that two and two are four without some postscript, of having them learn the simple lessons of history and of optics, and of hearing the plain, unadorned words of Moses, Isaiah, Jesus Christ and Paul.* Her instinct tells her that knowledge is against her; and hence this opposition to the schools, this resolution that nothing shall be studied in white light, but all things within stained windows. Hence imported Monsignors, doughty in dinner-table sieges of dukes and dowagers, threatening us from Palace Brunswicks,— as if, in all conscience, we had

* To banish the Bible from our schools, in obedience to the behests of prejudice and ignorance, would be folly and levity. We need more moral and religious words in our schools, rather than fewer,— in addition to wisely chosen passages from the Bible the wise words also of Plato, Marcus, Milton, Schiller and Emerson.

not enough Madeira-wine Bourbonism of our own to bother us,— that by the mere utterance of a word, *sharp as the click of a trigger*, Holy Church can shake our schools from top to bottom, and land us in *a fight!* Ah, Reverend Monsignor, how poorly you understand the nature of the people among whom you are dining; and how cheaply you make yourself ridiculous! This people made up its mind very long ago that there should be knowledge in this land, and that it would keep the guarantee of it effectually in its own hands; and, while it gives every church freedom to preach and pray and proselyte and propagate to the top of its bent, and to superinduce as much schooling as it will, it repels at the very threshold the attempt of any church to undermine the national education and meddle with its public schools. I do not gladly speak any word that may fan the flames of sectarian warfare, and I certainly do not share the feelings of those men who seem to be in a chronic state of alarm about the Roman Church; but I do feel that we should not worthily celebrate this day, if we neglected, in the plain language of our own time and with reference to the actual circumstances of our own State, firmly to speak the word of warning against the spirit with

which it was Luther's chief work, his whole life long, to wage inveterate war.*

Meantime, we heartily rejoice, and all good Catholics will rejoice with us, that, whether by reason of good Protestant censorship or by self-instituted drainage, the Holy Roman Church is not the noxious thing which it was when Monk Luther, wrestling with the Devil for his soul in Erfurt convent, was finding out that a monk "could not get to heaven by monkery,"— that he, at any rate, could not do it. For, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, this infallible, indefectible Church was rotten from the crown of its head to the sole of its foot. The crown of its head, when that century began, was Pope Alexander VI., Roderic Borgia. One of the jewels in this crown was the Spanish mistress, Rosa Vanozza, whom Roderic brought from Valencia to Rome, and lodged in a house near St. Peter's. She was the mother of five of his children,— those bright jewels Cæsar and Lucretia among them, — and during Roderic's own lifetime was married to some petty official about the court,—

* Almost Luther's last treatise was that "Against the Papacy," written the year before his death, and in the same spirit as that of his writings at the beginning of the Reformation. And, on one of those closing days at Eisleben, he exclaimed, "Living was I thy plague, and dying will I be thy death, O pope!"

married twice, indeed, I believe. Roderic had been made vice-chancellor, with twelve thousand crowns a year, by his uncle, Pope Calixtus III.,—an audacious bit of Spanish nepotism, which earned for Roderic the everlasting grudge of the Italian first families. But he cared very little about their grudges,—as little as he did about the scorching public reprimand addressed him by Pope Pius II. for his too public indulgence of his taste for female society in Siena. He was cardinal now,—well up on the ladder of indefectibility. He had been very influential in getting Pius made pope; and Pius had proved his gratitude, even if decency did compel the reprimand. He was influential, too, in getting Sixtus IV. made pope; and, for this, he received the rich abbey of Subiaco. Meantime, he was busy buying up votes against his own time; and, when Innocent VIII. died, in 1492, he had secured a sufficient number to create him pope. Five cardinals alone are recorded as incorruptible. The simoniacal character of the election is indisputable. Cardinal Sforza was made vice-chancellor of the Church; Cardinal Orsino was bought with Borgia's palace in Rome; Cardinal Colonna with the abbey of Subiaco; the Cardinal of St. Angelo with the bishopric of Porto and a cellar full of wine; the Cardinal of Parma

received the city of Nepi; a monk of Venice, who had obtained the cardinalate, sold his vote for five thousand ducats,—and so on. These statements rest upon the manifestly candid record of Burcardus, Borgia's master of ceremonies; and they have never been impeached. Surely, not a promising beginning for an indefectible papal career. Of the crimes alleged against the saint while in office, and against his children, Cæsar and Lucretia, it is impossible to say anything here; and the matters are too notorious to need discussion. Of Cæsar, —Cardinal Cæsar, made cardinal at eighteen, who once despatched six bulls successively in the amphitheatre (for the old amenities of the empire were now restored at Rome), and once pursued his father's favorite secretary to his arms, and there butchered him,—of Cæsar, Pope Borgia said, "The duke is really a good fellow: it is only a pity that he cannot endure to be offended." It is not too much to say that the pontificate of Alexander "rivalled the worst periods of the Roman Empire in debauchery, venality, and murder." The pope "made everything subordinate to the purpose of raising his bastard children above the heads of the oldest princely houses of Italy." Spiritual offices and privileges of every kind were sold

with an unblushing effrontery which eclipsed the auctions of the Prætorian Guards, and the estates of mysteriously murdered cardinals were successively pounced upon by the emissaries of the Vatican. Yet the Church looked on and laughed. When Luther was at Rome, he heard priests and monks telling as good jokes the scandalous stories of the Borgias. Every one knows the story of Pope Borgia's tragical end,— the story of the supper given to the ten cardinals in the villa, and the fatal exchange of the poisoned flask. The tale is probably a myth, but a myth almost always has very deep foundations. Pope Borgia died, duly provided with all the needful sacraments of the Church; and his swollen body, wrapped in an old carpet, was forced, with blows and jeers, amid the brawls of priests and soldiers, into a narrow coffin, and flung into an obscure vault. Then, the holy cardinals have another holy conclave, and the infallible Roman Church proceeds to crown itself anew.

This Pope Borgia was the crown of the head of Holy Church all through Martin Luther's youth. This man was "the undisputed bestower of kingdoms and the ultimate tribunal of appeal for Christian nations." To this man, Spain and Portugal had to resort for the adjust-

ment of their claims to the New World, discovered during his pontificate; and, "by tracing a line upon a map, he disposed of three-fourths of the human race." Never did a pope exert his prerogative with greater grandeur than this monstrous sinner; yet no one knew so well as he what a sham the papacy had already become, and how weak it really was. "The pope," said Luther, late in life, "is not God's image, but his ape. . . . Oh, such histories ought diligently to be written, to the end posterity may know upon what grounds popedom was erected and founded: namely, upon grounds of lies and fables. If I were younger, I would write a chronicle of the popes." Again, "I would fain the papist confutation might appear to the world; for I would set upon that old torn and tattered skin, and so baste it that the stitches thereof should fly about. But they shun the light."

This Pope Borgia, I have said, was the crown of the head. I do not propose to ask you to follow me down to the sole of the foot. Europe was overrun with clerical vermin, and groaned with the weight of convents. The churches were asylums for criminals, the monasteries the resort of dissolute youth. "In the cloister," said Luther, "rule the seven

deadly sins,— covetousness, lasciviousness, uncleanliness, hate, envy, idleness, and the loathing of the service of God." Priests made use of their exemption from tolls to open taverns to sell beer, and defended themselves against assault with excommunication and interdict. Whole villages disappeared and districts became waste, through the incessant augmentation of ecclesiastical property. The inordinate number of holidays paralyzed industry. Ordination was granted in the most reckless manner, and the constitution of the clergy was an offence to public morals. A multitude of ceremonies and rules were attributed to the mere desire to make money. The situation of priests living in a state of concubinage and burthened with illegitimate children, often tormented in conscience, afraid that in performing the sacrifice of the mass they committed a deadly sin, excited mingled pity and contempt. Most of those who embraced the monastic profession had no other idea than that of leading a life of self-indulgence without labor. The people saw that the clergy took from every class and station only what was agreeable, and avoided what was laborious or painful. "If a man wishes to enjoy himself for once," said an old proverb, "let him kill a fat fowl; if for a

year, let him take a wife; but, if he would live joyously all the days of his life, let him turn priest." This corruption is reflected in all the literature of the time, which was all satirical. The common characteristic of such works as the *Eulenspiegel* and *Reineke Fuchs*, full of things which a modern audience would hardly bear, is hostility to the Church of Rome. We find it keen and relentless in the satires of Ulrich von Hutten. "Three things are banished from Rome," says Hutten,—"simplicity, temperance, and piety; three things are desired at Rome,—short masses, old gold, and a merry life; three things uphold Rome,—the authority of the pope, the bones of the saints, and the pardon shop; three things they don't like to hear of,—a general council, the reformation of the clergy, and that the Germans are getting wiser." Again, he says, "You may live from plunder, commit murder and sacrilege, break the laws as you will; your talk may be shameful, your actions criminal; you may revel in lust, and deny God in heaven,—but, if you do but bring money to Rome, you are a most respectable person." *

*This general corruption of the Church was officially recognized by Pope Adrian VI., son of a Utrecht boat-maker, and crowned in 1522, the year after the Diet of Worms. This Dutch Pope Adrian could speak some honest truth, even in that much lying time. At the Diet of Nuremberg,

"The authority of the pope, the bones of the saints, and the pardon shop,"— the indulgence, superstition, papal infallibility,— that is just the triple-headed monster with which Luther had to deal. The superstition of the time is something incredible. This it was which made the drained and down-trodden people bear with priests and monks as they did,— the feeling that, somehow or other, they bore a charmed life. Miracles were worked without ceasing, at the tomb of Bishop Benno and elsewhere. Every church, and almost every cross-road, had its awe-inspiring relics. "They once showed me here, at Wittenberg," said Luther, "the drawers of St. Joseph and the breeches of St. Francis. The Archbishop of Mainz boasted he had a gleam of the flame of Moses' bush." This Archbishop of Mainz set up a perfect museum of relics at Halle — nine thousand — by way of raising some money. He had a portion of the body of Isaac, jugs of wine from the marriage-feast at Cana, and a

summoned to put down Luther, he declared roundly, through his legate, that "these disorders had sprung from the sins of men, more especially *from the sins of priests and prelates.* Even in the holy chair," said he, "many horrible crimes have been committed.... The contagious disease, spreading from the head to the members, from the pope to lesser prelates, has spread far and wide, so that scarcely any one is to be found who does right and who is free from infection." A pope who could say such things as that naturally found it rather uncomfortable living in Rome, and Adrian died after just twenty months of popedom.

most complete assortment altogether. He was also doing a brisk business in indulgences, when Luther wrote him, granting him two weeks' time to bring his business to a close, else he would issue his book *Against the Idol in Halle*, a copy of which he enclosed for his perusal. This had the desired effect. "At Compostella," said Luther, "they exhibit the standard of the victory that Jesus Christ gained over death and the devil." They showed him at Rome the halter wherewith Judas hanged himself; and, in his *Table-Talk*, he tells this story, with the same laughter, I am sure, with which we read it: "A German, making his confession to a priest at Rome, promised, on oath, to keep secret whatsoever the priest should impart unto him until he reached home. Whereupon, the priest gave him a leg of the ass on which Christ rode into Jerusalem, very neatly bound up in silk, and said, 'This is the holy relic on which the Lord Christ corporally did sit, with his sacred legs touching this ass' leg.' Then was the German wondrous glad, and carried the said holy relic with him into Germany. When he got to the borders, he bragged of his holy relic in the presence of four others, his comrades, when, lo! it turned out that each of them had likewise received from the same priest a

leg, after promising the same secrecy. Whereupon, all exclaimed with great wonder, 'Lord! had that ass five legs?'"

We laugh at these things, Luther laughed at them; but it was a very serious business with those poor German peasants. The breeches of St. Francis were a mighty lieutenant for the Holy Catholic Church in every village where they tabernacled,—and I do not doubt that Holy Church inherited a hundred pairs of breeches from St. Francis,— exercising a mysterious and indefinable, but pervasive and certain power, against which, in the case of most men brought up beneath the spell, the arguments of Protestantism were as ineffectual as the arguments of Zwingli against Luther's own bigoted "*Hoc est meum corpus.*" *

Do not think that the priests themselves were deceived by this chicanery. Partly, they were; partly, they did deceive themselves. It was with them as it was with those men in

*Upon occasion, Luther was the most inveterate bigot. "Reason is an abominable prostitute," he says, when it serves his turn. "I will have nothing to do with your mathematics," he said to Zwingli,—that was his term for Zwingli's rationalism,—"God is above mathematics!" He says in one place, concerning the doctrine of the Trinity: "What matters it, if it does seem strange or foolish? 'Tis not the question whether it be so or no, but whether it be grounded on God's Word or no." Nor was Luther free from many of the superstitions of his times. He seriously advocated the burning of Copernicus; and, of witches, he said: "I should have no compassion upon them. Burn them all."

Isaiah, who, having warmed themselves and roasted a roast, whittled out a god from the residue of the stock of the tree, and worshipped it, crying, "Deliver me, for thou art my god." That is the most melancholy and hopeless state of mind in this world,—the mind of the man who, once having called a pair of breeches the breeches of St. Francis, straightway believes his own invention and is afraid. But the chief priests were not afraid. They well understood the secrets of tailoring, and how it is that an ass has five legs or five hundred. The priests at Rome laughed in each other's faces and juggled with the people, eliciting their devout *Amens* to Latin heresies, blasphemies and inanities, which they boldly sandwiched into the Litany, by way of practical joking. "I would not have taken one hundred thousand florins not to have seen Rome," said Luther, speaking of the effect upon his mind of his pilgrimage thither. "Among other coarse talk, I heard one reading mass; and, when he came to the words of consecration, he said, 'Thou art bread, and shalt remain bread: thou art wine, and shalt remain wine.' What was I to think of this? Moreover, I was disgusted at the manner in which they could rattle off a mass, as if it had been a piece of jugglery; for,

long before I had reached the gospel lesson, my neighbor had finished his mass, and cried out to me, 'Enough! enough! hurry up and come away!'" Luther's nature was one especially calculated to be shocked by this jugglery and sham. His mind was peculiarly practical, occupied with essential and important things. He was an awkward priest from the start. "When I first began to celebrate mass in Popedom," he says, "and to make such crossings, with marvellous twistings of the fingers, and could not rightly hit the way, I said, Mary, God's Mother, how am I plagued with the mass, and especially with the crossings!" This impatience of painful ritualism grew with him. Some one sent to him to know whether it were permissible to use warm water in baptism. "Tell the blockhead," he replied, "that water, warm or cold, is water." A complaint comes to him that a certain reformed preacher will not preach without a cassock. "Well," answers Luther, "what harm will a cassock do the man? Let him have three cassocks, if he find benefit in them!" "You are not in earnest about calling a council," he said to the papal ambassador, who came to Wittenberg to confer with him. "If a council should be held, you would simply talk about hoods

and tonsure, eating and drinking, and similar fool-work, which amounts to nothing."

The kinds of men of whom the clergy were composed are well indicated by three utterances at the time of the first troubles at Wittenberg. "It is high treason against the Church," exclaimed Hochstraten, the inquisitor of Cologne, "to leave such a heretic alive another hour. Erect instantly the scaffold for him!" The Bishop of Brandenburg wrote privately to Luther, commending his zeal, and admitting that there was occasion for it, but telling him to be quiet. Priest Prierias wrote from Rome, "O dear Luther, wert thou to receive from our Lord, the Pope, a good bishopric, thou wouldst sing smaller, and even preach up the indulgence which it is now thy pleasure to vilify."

The pope must have laughed in the Vatican as he sent out his henchmen to sell indulgences; for it is not in reason that men of common sense, much less an astute scholar like Leo, could be sincere and religious in that business. This sale of indulgences, as is well known, was the immediate provocation of the Reformation. Theoretically, of course, indulgence was conditioned by actual repentance; and the doctrine is still a doctrine of the

Church, just as it was. But, in Leo's time, the repentance part of it was utterly ignored. No test of that was applied. The money was paid, the bill was given, and that completed the business. The Archbishop of Mainz, who had charge of the indulgences in Germany and was to have half the proceeds, was aiming simply to raise the price of his pallium, in securing which he had borrowed money of an Augsburg banker. We read that Tetzel, the agent with whom Luther first came into collision in Saxony, claimed, as the dispenser of the treasure of the Church, to be on a level with St. Peter, and to have saved more souls than he. With the money counter before him and the papal red cross borne aloft, he proclaimed in the market-place, in stentorian voice, the virtues, prospective and retrospective, of his paper pardons. "When one dropped a penny into the box," he said, "for a soul in purgatory, as soon as the money chinked in the chest the soul flew up to heaven." And his companion, Friar Bartholomew, shouted always as he closed, "Come and buy! come and buy!" He classified sins and misdemeanors, fixing a definite price for the pardon of each. Thus, sacrilege, or church robbery and perjury, were rated at nine ducats; a murder, already

committed, at eight ducats; adultery, at six ducats, etc.

VI.

Over this whole body of false doctrine and abominable living was spread the mantle of papal infallibility. "Though the Pope led people into hell," said one of the decretals, "they ought to follow him." The answer to every honest word of criticism and reproof was, Hear the Church; and the second time, Hear the Church; and the third time — the stake. Rome would not argue, and the whole world bent. But here came a man who would not bend, and would make Rome argue. "The chief cause that I fell out with the pope," said Luther, "was this: the pope boasted that he was the head of the Church, and condemned all that would not be under his power and authority. This was not to be endured." Here at last was a man who would force the pope to show his credentials, who ventured to ask the authority for this authority. Luther, I have said, killed the pope. He did it by asserting the principle that everything in this world must give a reason for itself. "Luther," says one, "has done more than any other man ever did to emancipate the human mind from usurped

authority." "Luther," says Michelet, "was, in point of fact, the restorer of spiritual liberty to the ages which followed his era. If he did not absolutely create, he at least courageously signed his name to the great revolution which legalized in Europe the right of free examination. To him, it is in great measure owing that we, of the present day, exercise in its plenitude that first great right of the human understanding, to which all the rest are attached and without which all the rest are naught. We cannot think, speak, write, read, for a single moment, without gratefully recalling to mind this enormous benefit of intellectual enfranchisement. The very lines I here trace, to whom do I owe it that I am able to send them forth, if not to the Liberator of modern thought?"

At times, when the flood of his inspiration is upon him, Luther declares the right of private judgment and freedom from all external authority with the same emphasis and fullness with which the prophet of to-day would speak. Just after the Leipzig disputation, he wrote in this strong way: "I believe myself to live in the kingdom of the truth. Therefore, I will be free and not give myself captive to any authority, be it that of the emperor or the univer-

sities or the pope, in order that I may confidently declare every thing which I recognize as truth, be it maintained by a Catholic or a heretic, whether a church council has accepted or rejected it." At the time of the insurrection of the peasants, in his address urging upon the German nobility the justice of the peasants' *Twelve Articles*, he writes as follows with reference to the article demanding the right of free election of their pastors by the congregations: "Authority must not and cannot interpose any prohibition of this, seeing that of right it should permit each man to teach and to believe that which to him seems good and fitting, whether it be gospel or whether it be false. All that authority is entitled to prohibit," he added,— herein anticipating Roger Williams and our whole modern view of toleration,— "is the preaching up of disorder and revolt." Luther was not indeed steadily true to his own highest insights and utterances. He lived in the midst of confusions and of distracting practical problems, which might have made it difficult for even a greater than himself to act always in beautiful harmony with his theories; but these were the clear and resolute doctrines of his clear and resolute hours.

Luther was the first great Rationalist. In him, Europe came to its majority. *Pope* means *papa* — is another form of that tender word. In Luther, mankind passed out of the period of *papahood.* But you will say that Luther simply substituted the Bible for the pope, the infallibility of dead writers for the infallibility of the present Church, and that he really did not get rid of the principle of prescriptive authority at all. And it is true enough that the manner in which Protestantism has made the Bible a pope has been a sad witness, up to our own time, of its poor grasp of the rational principle. In theory, an infallible present is certainly far nobler than an infallible past; and, of course, neither Luther nor anybody else has ever been able to give a reason why any body of men, in any age, should be regarded as infallible, however excellent and true. That rigid and superstitious theory of the infallibility of the Hebrew writers, which was dominant among English and American Protestants a generation ago, and which we are all familiar with, Luther himself indeed was far from holding. Orthodox scholars like Canon Mozley, who know what they write about, and are beyond the stage of pious declamation, laugh at the attempt, in general, "to assimilate

Luther's ethical and religious mould to that of an evangelical preacher of the present day." The Lutheran Church, in the course of time, gravitated into doctrines of plenary inspiration and infallible books; but, as Canon Westcott frankly states, "the later Lutherans abandoned the teaching of their great master on the written Word." "No church could rest on Luther's theory," says Canon Westcott, thereby recognizing the great difference between the theory of Luther and the theory of current Orthodoxy and the Church. Different men, of course, will have different minds as to whether Luther or Lutheranism is the wiser on this point, as on others. My desire here is simply to insist that Luther be held responsible only for his own doctrines. It is almost as necessary to distinguish between Luther and Lutheranism as between Christ and popular "Christianity." Whatever generalities Luther sometimes utters as to the authority of Scripture, and however rigorously and vigorously he stickles for a text when, as in the quarrel with Zwingli, it seems to make in his favor, nothing is more evident than that his practical criterion of a book's authority was its agreement with his own reason. His own reason, his own immediate conviction, is

always the first and commanding thing with Luther; and he speaks of his own inspiration in the identical language in which he speaks of the inspiration of St. Paul and of the old prophets, with whom he is fond of comparing himself. "I am Isaiah. . . . Philip Melanchthon is Jeremiah: that prophet stood always in fear." "The harsh and sharp words of the prophets go to the heart; yet when they say, 'Jerusalem shall fall and be destroyed,' the Jews held such preaching merely heretical, and would not endure it. Even so say I, The Romish Church shall fall and be destroyed; but the papists will neither believe nor endure it." "St. Paul says, 'I would they were cut off that trouble you.' I, too, Martin Luther, say," etc. When he came back to Wittenberg from the Wartburg, to check the excesses of Carlstadt and his party, he said to the people who crowded to the church to hear him, Carlstadt himself among them: "Satan has sent you his prophets in my absence, but you ought to know that I am the only person you should listen to. Martin Luther is the first man of the Reformation: he, therefore, should command, and you should obey. I am the man to whom God has revealed his Word." "I will submit my doctrine," he said, "neither to the

pope nor to the emperor nor to the angels in heaven. Therein, I am judge; and he who does not receive my doctrine is damned." And yet stronger: "He who believes otherwise than I is a child of hell; and whosoever condemns my doctrine, him will God condemn, for my mouth is the mouth of Christ." "Kings, princes, lords," he says, in his *Table-Talk*, "and any one will needs understand the gospel far better than I, Martin Luther, ay, or even than St. Paul; for they deem themselves wise and full of policy. But herein they scorn and contemn, not us, poor preachers and ministers, but the Lord and governor of all preachers and ministers, who has sent us to preach and teach, and who says, 'Whoso heareth you heareth me.'" "I am sure and certain," said Luther, "when I go up to the pulpit to preach or read, that it is not my word I speak, but that my tongue is the pen of a ready writer, as the Psalmist has it. God speaks in the prophets and men of God, as St. Peter in his Epistle says, 'The holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' In like manner, every hearer must say, I hear not St. Paul, St. Peter, or a man speak, but God himself." We read that Bullinger, to whom Luther said this and much

more in the same strain, having attentively listened to the discourse, knelt down and uttered these words: "O happy hour, that brought me to hear this man of God, the chosen vessel of the Lord, declaring his truth! I abjure and utterly renounce my former errors, thus beaten down by God's infallible Word." He then arose, and threw his arms around Luther's neck, both shedding joyful tears.

Probably Luther's own view of inspiration could not be shown more exactly than in the following passage from the *Table-Talk:* "Melanchthon, discoursing with Luther touching the prophets, who continually boast thus: 'Thus saith the Lord,' asked whether God in person spoke with them or no. Luther replied: 'They were very holy, spiritual people, who seriously meditated upon holy and divine things: therefore, God spake with them in their consciences, which the prophets held as sure and certain revelations.'" Of the inspiration of no other does he speak in such decided and emphatic terms as of his own. "I surely know," he says, "that the doctrine I teach is God's Word." "I know for certain that what I teach is the only Word of the high majesty of God in heaven, his final conclusion

and everlasting, unchangeable truth; and whatsoever concurs and agrees not with this doctrine is altogether false, and spun by the devil. . . . I have before me God's Word, which cannot fail. . . . We must not regard what or how the world esteems us, so we have the Word pure, and are certain of our doctrine. Hence, Christ in John viii.: 'Which of you convinceth me of sin? And, if I say the truth, why do you not believe me?' All the apostles were most certain of their doctrine. . . . When a man has this certainty, he has overcome the serpent." He thus bases his inspiration upon the same grounds as that of the apostles and, apparently, of Christ himself, the ground of the true soul's immediate communion with God. But he has no doctrine of the infallibility of the apostles or the prophets of a character which forbids his criticising them in the same frank and free manner in which he criticises Melanchthon or Justus Jonas. "The apostles," he says, "did not sufficiently extol or explain Abraham's faith. I much marvel that Moses so slightly remembers him." Again: "The apostles themselves did not know everything, even after they had received the Holy Ghost."

Luther made the Bible the rule of faith in

the Church, because he believed that, for the most part, it supported what, both through Biblical and other influences, he was persuaded was the truth. But there is no bit of Bibliolatry, or mere mechanical submission to Biblical authority, in Luther; and certainly there was never a freer critic of the canon than he. "See with your own eyes," he once said; and, in dealing with the Bible as with everything else, he followed his own maxim. He handles the Testaments just as he handles the Apocryphas. "I am so great an enemy," he says, "to the Second Book of the Maccabees and to Esther that I wish they had not come to us at all. They are full of heathen unnaturalities." He could not believe that God commanded Abraham to kill his son. The miracles of the Old Testament sometimes quite stagger him, well inclined as he is to entertain the marvelous, even in his own time. "The history of Elijah," he says, "is almost incredible." "The history of the prophet Jonah is almost incredible, sounding more strange than any poet's fable. If it were not in the Bible, I should take it for a lie; for consider how for the space of three days he was in the great belly of the whale, whereas in three hours he might have been

digested." The general futility of the miraculous is well hinted by him in the remark, "If Moses had continued to work his miracles in Egypt but two or three years, the people would have become accustomed thereto, and heedless, as we who are accustomed to the sun and moon hold them in no esteem." "The Third Book of Esdras," he says, "I throw into the Elbe." "The Book of Solomon's Proverbs is a fine book," but "it is not the work of Solomon." "The Book of the Kings is excellent,— a hundred times better than the Chronicles, which constantly pass over the most important facts." As to the Book of Genesis, he said, "What matters it if Moses did not write it?" His respect for Moses altogether was not great. "I will have none of Moses and his law," he says in one place, "for he is an enemy to Christ. If Moses will go to law with me, I will give him his despatch, and say, Here stands Christ." "Let us leave Moses to his laws," he says again, "excepting only the *Moralia*, which God has planted in nature." When some one asked him, "Did not Moses command us to obey our father and mother?" he answered, "Yes; and your obedience should come, not because Moses commanded, but because it is natural that you

should obey your father and mother, and because it is right."

Turning to the New Testament,— "St. John's Gospel," he says, "and St. Paul's Epistles, especially those to the Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians,— these and St. Peter's First Epistle teach all which it is needful for thee to know, even if you never see or hear any other book." The Epistle to the Hebrews, he says, was certainly not written by an apostle. It was, he thinks, "put together out of many pieces." The Epistle of Jude is "indisputably an extract from the Second Epistle of Peter." Of the Apocalypse, he says: "I hold it to be neither apostolic nor prophetic. . . . My spirit cannot acquiesce in the book." And he makes sport of the writer's threats against those who add to or take from his book, "when," observes Luther, "nobody knows what is in the book." "Let each man," he says, "judge of the book according to the light that is in him. I say simply what I think of it myself. Many of the Fathers of the Church rejected it. Every man is at liberty to treat it according to the dictates of his own mind." The ground on which he denies the inspiration of a book is always simply his individual opinion as to

its doctrine or its style; and certainly no Tübingen professor of our own time ever proceeded with greater boldness or freedom in the matter. His freedom appears most strikingly in his famous criticism of the Epistle of James. "It is an *epistle of straw*," he said. "I will not have it in my Bible among the canonical books"; "it has no character of the gospel in it." It is "directly contrary to St. Paul and to all the rest of the Scripture." "This James," he continues, "must have been some good, pious man, who had got hold of some sentences from the disciples of the apostles, and so put them on paper"; but he was certainly no apostle, and he is "quite unequal to the task" which he undertakes.

Luther's trouble with James' Epistle was simply that it has nothing of his favorite doctrine of justification without works in it. The gospel, in Luther's mouth, generally means simply the doctrine of imputed righteousness. My own opinion of that doctrine is the opinion of Bishop Bull and of Canon Mozley. I am glad to be able to express myself in the language of so eminent a churchman as Canon Mozley, since my own position with regard to things ecclesiastical is such, fortunately or unfortunately, that words of mine here, unembel-

lished by aristocratic quotation marks, might not pass for much with some good people. "Formally and literally stated, then," says Canon Mozley,— and I beg to refer to his able discussion of this vitally important point, to which I can return only in the most cursory manner,— "the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith is so inconsistent with the first principles of common sense and natural religion that, in this shape, no human being can possibly believe it. It requires us to believe that that which makes a man pleasing to God, or justifies him, has nothing to do with morality or goodness in him; and, being moral creatures, we cannot believe this." Our own time, happily, I think, values the Epistle of James a good deal more highly than Luther did, and the doctrine of imputed sin and righteousness a good deal less. I quote his words upon the Epistle simply to show the utterly different way in which he approached the Bible from that which has prevailed in the Protestant Churches down quite to our own time, and is yet common. "When he criticises the Epistle of St. James in the passage quoted," says Canon Mozley, "and decides that it contains many excellent remarks, and that its author was doubtless a worthy man, though anti-

quated in his opinions; that he, Luther, did not consider him inspired, but had no objection to any one else considering him so who chose, we can almost suppose him dreaming, so little does he seem to realize the shock he is giving to Christian faith." Such words as these — which, I take it, fairly express the feeling of our contemporary Orthodoxy — serve chiefly, to my mind, to show us, in strong light, the deeply *rational* grounds of Luther's faith, as opposed to the grounds of the common churchman, and how far removed he was from what men call the Protestant principle of authority.

Luther was, I repeat, the first great Rationalist. I do not mean by this, of course, to say that approval or tolerance is to be drawn from words of his for a thousand and one positions at which Rationalism in our day has arrived. That would be as arbitrary and ridiculous as the common attempt to make him appear in the garb of "an evangelical preacher of the present day," which Canon Mozley so properly makes sport of. I can imagine the thunderstorm there would have been in Wittenberg, had Luther chanced to have come there upon a copy of *Unity* or the *Index*. Yet I boldly assert — it does not need great boldness — that, coming into the science of our time with the

same spirit with which he came into the science of four centuries ago, Martin Luther would have been, not Joseph Cook nor Moody and Sankey,— but Theodore Parker.

VII.

Luther stands for *Rationalism.* He stands also for *Intellectualism* in religion. You think, perhaps, the two words mean one thing. I mean by Intellectualism here the doctrinal and speculative factor in religion, as contrasted with the ethical and practical. Protestantism was primarily an intellectual movement. I do not say it was not a moral movement too. I have pointed out some of the gross immoralities which provoked it, and there is no doubt that these were what first and chiefly moved the masses to the Reformation. But Luther saw, Protestantism saw or believed it saw, the cause of the immorality to be *false doctrine;* and it believed the cure to be *true doctrine.* Herein — in its primary intellectualism — the Lutheran movement differs from the Wesleyan movement and, in a very great degree, from Christianity. Herein it resembles the Unitarian movement in New England. "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat,"

said Christ. "All, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, but do not ye after their works." And Wesley had very little trouble with the English catechism, but very much trouble with English immorality and irreligion. But, with Luther, the case is different. He was not primarily a practical reformer, but a doctrinal reformer. "Wiclif and Huss," he said, "assailed the immoral conduct of the papists; but I chiefly oppose and resist their doctrine. I affirm, roundly and plainly, that they preach not the truth. To this I am called. I take the goose by the neck and set the knife to its throat. I fall upon the pope's soul,—his doctrine,—not regarding his body,—that is, his wicked person and life. When I can show that the papists' doctrine is false, which I have shown, then I can easily prove that their manner of life is evil. For when the word remains pure, the manner of life, though something therein be amiss, will be pure also." With his usual reckless inconsistency, he says on the same page, "Our manner of life is as evil as that of the papists"; and we well know that he did pay very much regard to the pope's "wicked person and life." But this passage truly and well illustrates the fundamental character of Luther's mind and

the order of his thought. "If any man will do God's will," said Jesus, "he shall know of the doctrine." If any man hath the pure doctrine, said Luther, more like Paul, his life will be pure also. The life,— that is the first thing with Jesus; the truth,— that is always the first thing with Luther. I do not make the antithesis for the sake of condemning Luther. I hold both sayings to be true, though each is only half of the truth. What is Luther's truth? What is the real meaning and virtue of his doctrine of justification by faith, if we can get it out of its ghostly and unreal theological atmosphere, into the natural, wholesome light of day? Is it not this,— that, if you want to make a hero of a man, the surest way to do it is to fill his mind with some great and noble idea, some conception of life, of neighborhood, of the State, of destiny, of this God's universe, very much loftier and more commanding than he has had before? Place two men together in the battle,— two men of equal courage and of equal honor. Tell this one to fight valiantly where he is placed, on the side where he sees good men are ranged, and more and more he shall find out what it is all about, and in the end be satisfied; and let this other have clear consciousness that the flag which

leads him is the flag of his State, that the State is in him and behind him, and that the just cause, well understood, in which his sword is drawn, is that of his State's honor and salvation. In whose arteries, think you, will the blood course reddest and most dynamic, and which is likeliest to be the hero? Or give a man a grand and true conception of humanity and history. Teach him that his freedom and every privilege he holds great and sacred,— the book, the school, the State, science, art, law and decency, even each steady impulse to what is good and public,— that every institution and possession which represents unselfishness and differentiates him from the boor, the blackguard, the savage and the brute,— that every one of these is the outcome and the monument of the devotion and the martyrdom of the ages, the witness that, for humanity's sake and truth's sake, men through the long generations, superior to every suffering and temptation, have kept the faith,— such faith as their time had come to,— not counting their lives dear unto them. Teach him that, make him really understand and appropriate it, and do you not clearly see that, by such a sense of the cost of society and the profound significance of human history, a man who has any manhood in him to

be stirred is going to be made a larger and more dutiful man, a more saintly and heroic one, than you can ever make him by telling him, ever so Sinaitically, Do your duty, do the right, just because it is right? Other men have labored, and we have entered into their labors; and gratitude, with throbbing heart, leaps up to answer grace. Are we debtors to the past? Then, we must be creditors of the future, and so stand justified in our membership in the great body of humanity, to whose soul — be praised, O Heaven,—

> "The past and the time to be are one,
> And both are now."

Humanity, the Holy Ghost of God and Truth in humanity, has wrought for us these benefits and nobilities. Humanity hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; it was wounded — and will be wounded — for our transgressions; it was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon it; and with its stripes we are healed.

I believe — I may be wrong, but I believe — that this is the essential and eternal truth in Luther's doctrine of imputed sin and righteousness, and points the way to worthy understanding of what Protestantism calls "the scheme

of salvation." This scheme, be sure, would never have gotten such grasp upon the souls of men, did it not stand for truth; and the New Faith will never get beyond it by negation, but only by intelligent and sincere subsumption of it in a higher synthesis. Men must be taught, it seems, in religion, as in all besides, by object lessons; and Christ was the great object lesson, for the Western World, of the conception of humanity as one in essence and idea with the Power by which the worlds are and were created.

Luther's inveterate and almost wrathful depreciation of good works as affecting man's salvation seems to me a radical mistake. The theory of the old Church, however bad its practice, was better than this. This casts a slur on that which we count first in life, and ever must count first,— morality and character. Nor can it be successfully denied, I think, that its effects in Protestant Christendom — so far as it has had effects, and not been neutralized or complemented by elementary human reason — have been mischievous. The Church has substituted vouchers of agonies and illuminations as the rule to govern her baptisms, for her master's simple canon, By their fruits ye shall know them; and orthodoxy is a more

potent credential than philanthropy for her high places. Thus has she hurt her own repute and, what is worse, impaired her virtue and her sanity.

What especially stirred Luther to so great dislike of Aristotle was Aristotle's doctrine that good works make the habit or principle,— that a man becomes just by doing just acts. "We must first be just," cried Luther, "and then we shall do just actions." "It grieves me to the heart," he said, "that the damned, arrogant, rascally heathen with his false words has seduced and befooled so many Christians." But Luther should have known that, even with Aristotle, the good deed gets all its moral value, is a moral deed at all, only from and through its motive; and it is hard for us to understand how he should not have known also that a pure motive to a good deed is possible with no theology and no philosophy at all, and that every such good deed helps genuinely both to fix good habit and to induce the mind toward truth. The Church's doctrine, formulated in the Thirteenth Article of the Thirty-nine, that all good works done "out of Christ," as the phrase is,— that is, done by those who do not believe the Creed,— are of the nature of sin, and displeasing in the sight of God, is

the most monstrous and immoral doctrine into which theologians were ever betrayed by their mad schematizing.

But, arbitrary, violent and one-sided as Luther's doctrine is, it is a mighty witness to the omnipotence of ideas and the certain truth that everything must come to the intellectual justification in the end. The dictum of Socrates, that knowledge is virtue, may be true or may not be. Ideally, I hold it true. Practically, it is an unsafe proverb, since knowledge is never perfect; and we are all acquainted well enough with the immorality and selfishness of most enlightened men, and the moral excellence of bigots and of fools. But, if truth be not goodness, it is certainly the next thing to it in this world; and the New Faith would make a great mistake if, in any abandonment to the ethical and humanitarian passion, which now at last seems to be genuinely and nobly developing in it, and in which all men must rejoice, it neglected for a moment its duty in the direction of rationalism and enlightenment. Never be patient with that common saying, that it does not matter what a man believes, so long as his heart is right. It does matter. It is of immense importance that a man's creed be right, as well as his heart. His creed is going

to tell upon his heart most mightily with the years; and, day by day, it is going to determine whether he will deal with this duty to his brother man and with this great public interest in a large way or a small way. No wise and serious man, it seems to me, can lift up his eyes and see how, even in this free and enlightened America, all about you, in your street, in your house, family life is embittered, friends alienated, lovers torn asunder, faithful and able scholars elbowed into attics that pedants and parrots may teach in your colleges, a thousand sacred and public interests settled without reason, entailing waste and misery and injustice horrible, all through the ignorance, the superstition, the narrow-mindedness and *false creed* of good people,—people, as you say, whose hearts are right, people of good intentions,—no man, I say, can see this, no man, into whose soul the iron of it has entered, can see this without crying out, in agony of anger, the old word, Hell is paved with good intentions: what you need is light and knowledge,—the eye of a better, larger creed above your blind good intentions. It is not enough to be good in this world: we must also be true, altogether true, always lifting up our creed into conformity with the highest science of our

time, always keeping our minds alert for new knowledge, and always standing resolutely for the largest and noblest philosophy which it is possible for us to reach. The Unitarian movement in New England may have erred by over-intellectualism. Channing, in his later years, had sad misgivings as to its nature and its fate, because, like Lutheranism, it was not primarily an impulse for the moral regeneration of society and of the soul. But let not the New Faith ever err by under-intellectualism. Let no noble enthusiasm for humanity and good works betray us into slighting science, faith, philosophy and speculation. Speculation is the wings of the mind,—for the mind is a winged thing, and not a creeping thing. Concepts without intuitions, Kant said, are empty: intuitions without concepts are blind. In such wise complementary and inter-dependent are faith and works, philosophy and duty. Faith without works, said St. James, in the text so hated by Luther, is dead; and works without faith, duty without philosophy or outlook, may not expect long life.

VIII.

But an enlightened creed is only one factor in an excellent life. "Thou believest that there is one God," says this same decried St. James: "thou doest well; the devils also believe." And, if Luther really believed that, if a man once grasped the Protestant doctrine, his life would become holy, he was doomed to terrible disappointment. The preaching of Protestantism, all through Luther's life, seemed chiefly to be making the world not better, but worse. The very common idea of the Reformation as a universal revival of religion is a very superficial and untrue idea. The history of the Reformation is like that of every great period of religious transition. The world was full of men whose eyes were open to the glaring sins and superstitions of the old religion, and who were pouring ridicule and satire upon them in every way that might not invite the stake. Europe was honeycombed with scepticism and cynicism and uncleanness, only less general than those of old Rome when Christ and Christianity appeared. Into this comes Luther, with bolder and more outspoken unbelief in the old Church than the boldest sceptic of them all, but with a deep, new truth, which they know

nothing of. To the old Church, he appears but as one of these, only as the most uneasy and defiant of its assailants,—just as, to the orthodox paganism of old Rome, Christianity seemed only one atheism among the other atheisms, which were making men neglect the ritual and desert the temples. To the great mass of malcontents, Luther was welcome, because he spoke out their antagonism and unbelief so much better than they could ever do it; and multitudes caught up his doctrines of private judgment and free thought as the instrument and sanction of abominations. Where the new gospel made one religious man, it simply unsettled ten,—undermining their faith in the priests and sacraments and authority of the old Church, while powerless to give them the new faith, since to most men, and especially in religion, a thing gets sanctity only when it gets age. Luther had to face the chaos which every reformer must expect in a period of religious upheaval. "He had the pain of seeing, one after another, various tendencies in the Reformation prematurely brought out and exhibited in exaggerated shape and with accompaniments of violence and horror before the world." "As soon as Spiritualism had made a breach in the old

edifice of the Church," says Heine, "sensualism with all its long restrained fervor of passion threw itself into it, and Germany became the tumultuous arena of combatants intoxicated with liberty. The history of Germany at this time consists of little else than sensualistic riots. Everywhere, the doors of monasteries flew open, and monks and nuns rushed billing and cooing into each other's arms. High prelates began to reflect whether they might not marry their cooks. The towns' deputies rejoiced at the prospect of increased independence. Each had here something to gain, and the secret thoughts of each were directed to earthly advantage. For the Catholic party, it is easy to assign the worst motives; and, to hear them speak, one would suppose that the sole object of the Reformation were to legitimize the most shameless sensuality and to plunder the goods of the Church. We presently see how small was the result of this reaction, how Spiritualism succeeded in overcoming these rioters, and how it gradually secured its authority."

"One man was there," says Heine, "who was not thinking of earthly advantages, but of the divine interests which he represented. This man was Martin Luther, the poor monk

chosen by Providence to shatter the world-empire of Rome." But now iconoclasts and libertines, demagogues and lunatics of every sort, were abroad, haranguing the people and calling Luther their father. "My friends have done as much to injure me as my enemies," he said. He was held responsible for all the mad doings of Anabaptists and Antinomians; and every crime in the calendar, offspring of the general unsettlement, was charged to his account. "They reproach me with all this," he cried, "me, unhappy Martin Luther. They reproach me, too, with the revolt of the peasants, and with the sacramentarian sects, as though I had been their author." He saw a hard, materialistic spirit manifesting itself all about him; and, among his own pronounced followers, anything but a strong, united, satisfying religious life. The common people, he wrote, after a visitation among the country villages, "live like cattle and irrational swine; and, now that the gospel has come to them, they understand how to abuse their liberty in a masterly manner. O ye bishops," he adds, well knowing where the responsibility lies, "how will ye be able to give an account to Christ, that ye have suffered the common people to be degraded in ignorance, and have not given full proof of your ministry?"

There was, undoubtedly, much truth in what Erasmus wrote to Hutten, that Luther's followers were made up of these three classes: first, learned and well-meaning people, who approve of most of his doctrines, and wish to see the power of the pope and bishops restrained; a second class of men, without education or judgment, and of impure lives, who adhere to Luther without accepting his teaching or even knowing what it is; a third class, whose only object is booty and plunder, and who only make a pretext of the gospel. I see, continued Erasmus, many Lutherans, but few evangelicals. If Hutten knew of people who spent their time in reading the Scriptures and pious converse, instead of with women, in drinking and play; who, instead of cheating about debts, freely gave to the needy; who, instead of insulting those who have never harmed them, would give a soft answer to an angry word; who, instead of making disturbances, promote peace and good-will,—if Hutten would show Erasmus Lutherans like these, he would joyfully join himself to them. If there were any such, they were extremely rare.

Luther himself was plunged into deep melancholy by the poor and inadequate results which he saw. It often seemed as though all

that he meant for good was turned to evil. "The Devil often assaults and perplexes me by objecting that, out of my doctrine, great offences and much evil have proceeded." "The darkness," he said, "grows thicker around us, and godly servants of the Most High become rarer and rarer. Impiety and licentiousness are rampant. I hope the last day will not be long delayed." "Sodom and Gomorrah," he wrote in 1530, "were never one-tenth part so wicked as Germany is now. . . . It is a strange and grievous thing that the world hath become worse and worse since the revival of the true doctrine of the gospel. . . . Every one perverts Christian liberty into carnal wantonness. . . . If I could do it according to my conscience, I would advise and assist to bring back the rule of the pope." Again and again, we find him wishing, in his hours of despondency, that he had "never begun this business with the pope." But this is only in his hours of despondency. His common word is, "This is what was to be expected, this is the way of the world." "I will fight it out. I know my quarrel and cause are just. On, in God's name!"

How deep a lesson there is in all this for the adherent and apostle of the New Faith of our own day! The laws which governed thought

in Luther's time rule also in the time of Emerson and, little changed by changing circumstance, will work inexorably through the centuries. Ever the prophet of new truth will appear, to the establishments and orthodoxies of his time, as the lawless, unbelieving man, like the other unbelievers; and the more earnest and sincere he is, the more dangerous will the orthodoxies count him,— sincere and hypocritical orthodoxies alike,— and the more earnestly will they seek to silence him. The reformer must always appear, in the first place, as the negator of what is established, always as a breaker of idols. "The painful but indispensable first preparative for *true* sovereigns getting place among us," says Carlyle, "I find to be a revolt against *false* sovereigns." This necessary negative element in new truth wins for it the quick applause of all the restless, the reckless, and the faithless,— all those to whom the criticism of the popular theology is a mere Mephistophelian game, or who are hostile to it no more because of its obvious intellectual defects than because it stands, in its way, for what is transcendental, conserving, and religious. The rising new faith of an age will ever draw the faithless to its standard, not because they spiritually apprehend the faith, but be-

cause they are tickled by the novelty, the negativeness and the idol-breaking; and the new faith must ever be prepared to pay the price of disrepute from libertine applause and following, alike in Corinth, in Wittenberg and in Boston. It must also be prepared for what will certainly ensue, and what is hardest for the philanthropic mind to bear,—to see itself, in its own day, the creator, not chiefly of a deeper faith among the masses of mankind, but rather of unfaith,—destroying, as it does, false sanctions, which were, nevertheless, sustaining and commanding, and which only the idealizing influences of time can replace or teach the multitude of mechanic and dependent minds to see in itself. Such are the birth-throes by which new truth comes into society and into the soul. This is the great law which the reformer must learn to recognize, and before whose operations he must school his heart, how merciful and loving soever, not to shrink. The years shall be his sure justifiers; and upon their potency and their perspective he may peacefully rely, unmoved by any suffering or disorder, if he is sure of his truth, into misgiving or regret for having "begun this business with the pope." "Luther and his Protestantism," says Carlyle, "are not responsible

for wars; the false Simulacra that forced him to protest, they are responsible. Luther did what every man that God has made has not only the right, but lies under the sacred duty to do: answered a Falsehood when it questioned him. Dost thou believe me? No! at what cost soever, without counting of costs, this thing behoved to be done. Union, organization, spiritual and material, a far nobler than any Popedom or Feudalism in their truest days, I never doubt, is coming for the world; sure to come. But on Fact alone, not on Semblance and Simulacrum, will it be able either to come, or to stand when come." To-day is Luther's justification. To-morrow, faithful, fearless soul, shall be your own. To-morrow, the great vision which inspires you and which men dread to-day shall be an institution and a universal sacrament. "There will be a new church founded on moral science, at first cold and naked, a babe in a manger again, the algebra and mathematics of ethical law, the church of men to come, without shawms or psaltery or sackbut; but it will have heaven and earth for its beams and rafters; science for symbol and illustration; it will fast enough gather beauty, music, picture, poetry. Was never stoicism so stern and exigent as this shall be. It shall

send man home to his central solitude, shame these social, supplicating manners, and make him know that much of the time he must have himself to his friend. He shall expect no co-operation, he shall walk with no companion. The nameless Thought, the nameless Power, the superpersonal Heart,— he shall repose alone on that. He needs only his own verdict. No good fame can help, no bad fame can hurt him. The Laws are his consolers, the good Laws themselves are alive, they know if he have kept them, they animate him with the leading of great duty, and an endless horizon."

IX.

Always the world's pomp and power on this hand; on that hand, for God's truth, one man! *Individualism*,— if we must put into one word that new and distinctive thing which Luther and Protestantism stand for, it must be *individualism*. "The principle of *moral individualism*," rightly says Principal Tulloch, "of the free, responsible relation of every soul to God,— this it is which stamps the movement of Luther with its characteristic impress and, more than any other thing, enables us to understand its

power and success.* It was this element of individualism that had become especially corrupted during many centuries of ecclesiastical bondage. Scholasticism on the one hand and monkery on the other had crushed it out of sight. A vast system of traditionalism, covering every sphere of thought and every phase of society, left no room for any fresh and healthy individual life. The individual was nothing: the school or the Church was everything. . . . In various forms, the smouldering life of these centuries had continued to show itself; it had burst forth in the magnanimous intrepidity of Jerome and Huss, and the beautiful mysticism of Tauler and the *Theologia Germanica;* but now, at length, the fire of a strong individual conviction was kindled in the convent at Erfurt, which was destined to cover with its glory the face of Europe. . . . The hearts of men were weary with seeking salvation in the way of the

*"There is perhaps no event in history which has been represented in so great a variety of lights as the Reformation. It has been called a revolt of the laity against the clergy, or of the Teutonic races against the Italians, or of the kingdoms of Europe against the universal monarchy of the popes. Some have seen in it only a burst of long-repressed anger at the luxury of the prelates and the manifold abuses of the ecclesiastical system; others, a renewal of the youth of the Church by a return to primitive forms of doctrine. All these, indeed, to some extent it was; but it was also something more profound, and fraught with mightier consequences than any of them. It was in its essence the assertion of the principle of *individuality*,— that is to say, of true spiritual freedom. Hitherto, the personal consciousness had

priests; and, as the voice of the monk of Wittenberg was heard crying: 'No priest can save you,—no masses or indulgences can help you! but God has saved you,—he himself, and no mediatory saints, no holy mother of God even, but God himself,' . . . this faith in a divine righteousness near to every soul made for itself a living way among the nations, and carried with it, wherever it went, liberty and strength."

Not what the Church said, not what the Emperor said, nor Diets, nor Universities, but only that which his own mind affirmed to be the truth,—only that should henceforth bind the man, and that should absolutely bind him. The soul which has created institutions is more than they, and closer to the secret and the power of God than every sacrament and every sanction. The voice of the whole multitude may be the voice of confusion, the voice of the single man may be the voice of God. Luther's "Here I stand" was the first and the

been a faint and broken reflection of the universal; obedience had been held the first of religious duties; truth had been conceived as a something external and positive, whose saving virtue lay not in its being felt and known to be truth, but in a purely formal and unreasoning acceptance. . . . Now, that which was external and concrete was to be superseded by that which was inward and spiritual. It was proclaimed that the individual spirit, while it continued to mirror itself in the world-spirit, was nevertheless a centre of self-issuing force, and was to be in all things active rather than passive. Truth was no longer to be truth to the soul, until it should have been by the soul recognized, and in some measure even created!"—*Bryce*.

most memorable assertion in the modern world of that great principle of individualism and the sacred right and duty of private judgment, which has been the mightiest instrument against pretension and abuse, and wrought that greater degree of justice, reason and enlightenment, which we enjoy. It has kept ringing on through the centuries, to Emerson's "Good men must not obey the laws too well," and "Let the single man plant himself on his instincts, and the great world shall come round to him." It spoke in Puritanism; it was the Quaker's Inner Light; Lowell declared it, when he sang, "The scaffold sways the future"; and Frederick Douglass, when he said, "One is a majority with God." Or, going backward, it was in Athanasius against the world; it was in Paul's "I think I have the spirit of God"; it was in the sure "Thus saith the Lord" of the Hebrew prophet and the Arab sage; it was in the sublime confidence of Jesus, "I and my Father are one."

For "at bottom," says Carlyle, "it was no new saying: it was a return to all old sayings that ever had been said. Be genuine, be sincere: that was, once more, the meaning of it." "The right of private judgment will subsist in full force wherever true men subsist. A true man *believes* with his whole judgment, with all

the illumination and discernment that is in him, and has always so believed. A false man, only struggling to 'believe that he believes,' will naturally manage some other way. Protestantism said to this latter, Woe! and to the former, Well done!"

"The exercise of private judgment," says Carlyle further, "faithfully gone about, does by no means necessarily end in selfish independence, isolation, but rather ends necessarily in the opposite of that. It is not honest inquiry that makes anarchy; but it is error, insincerity, half-belief and untruth, that make it. A man protesting against error is on the way toward uniting himself with all men that believe in truth. There is no communion possible among men who believe only in hearsays. . . . Such a man cannot unite with men: he is an anarchic man. Only in a world of sincere men is unity possible; and there, in the long run, it is as good as *certain*."

The favorite watchword of to-day among our liberal leaders is not *individualism*, but rather *socialism,— co-operation, association, solidarity*. The prophet of the next brief time will not, perhaps, be so much Emerson as Mazzini. A pure and noble prophet, and *solidarity* a great and noble, necessary word! It was not absent

from the thought of Emerson, but present there with ever greater frequency and force as his years went on. "Emerson," says Lowell, "reverencing strength, seeking the highest outcome of the individual, has found that society and politics are also main elements in the attainment of the desired end, and has drawn steadily manward and worldward." "Age brought with it," says his biographer, "an even warmer glow of interest in his fellow-men; and the new life of the Republic brought to him an enlarged perception of the organic life of the race in its relations to morals and religion. He came to see a new value in a united religious life for the people, though abating no jot of his soul trust." Yet it is not as the prophet of solidarity, but as the prophet of individualism, that Emerson chiefly speaks to us, and will speak; nor may we safely, in any noble enthusiasm for association, neglect his primary appeal to individual virtue, his primary method of the regeneration of the individual soul, nor his warning not to expect more out of concert than we put into it. "No institution," he said, "will be better than the institutor." "There can be no concert in two, where there is no concert in one." This is the truth for which, above all else, Luther and Protestantism stand; and,

whenever men are in danger of neglecting this, then is that occasion timely and beneficent, which brings before the mind again the scenes of Wittenberg and Worms.

Individualism — private judgment, faithfully gone about — does not end in selfish isolation, says Carlyle, but rather ends necessarily in the opposite of that. Not in anarchy, but in rational fraternity. Why? Because this is God's world, and not the devil's; because the essence and first principle of it is reason, and not anarchy, truth and not falsehood, freedom and not fate. The sure cure and the only one for all evils wrought by rationalism is more rationalism and better. The honest thinker, however severe and destructive his thoughts, may think bravely on, undisturbed by any sufferings or disorder,

> "Certain, if Knowledge bring the sword,
> That Knowledge takes the sword away."

Reason working itself out, having its perfect work, must needs bring rational relations and that free order which reflects the divine original. Freedom is not caprice; and so it is that the great prophets of individualism who have most deeply moved the world have been precisely they who have recognized most deeply and devoutly the Universal Law, which will in

no wise conform to us, but to which it is the grand, ennobling quality of life to teach us to conform with confidence and joy. The great prophets of Freedom have been also the great prophets of the Beautiful Necessity; the great believers in the soul, the great believers, too, in God. "I would wish all men to know and lay to heart," says Carlyle, our own time's great prophet of individualism, "that he who discerns nothing but Mechanism in the Universe has in the fatalest way missed the secret of the Universe altogether. That all Godhood should vanish out of men's conception of this Universe seems to me precisely the most brutal error — I will not disparage Heathenism by calling it a Heathen error — that men could fall into. A man who thinks *so* will think *wrong* about all things in the world; this original sin will vitiate all other conclusions he can form." And Emerson's most penetrating and persistent word is this: "O my brothers, *God is!*" The soul is soul, because God is; the individual infinite and omnipotent, because the commanding Universal is behind him and within him, and beneath him are the Everlasting Arms. "God drives me," Luther used to say: "I am not master of myself." "Great people and champions," he said, "are special gifts of God,

whom he gives and preserves: they do their work, and achieve great things, not with vain imaginations, or cold and sleepy thoughts, but by motion of God." And again, "I only read in the Bible at Erfurt in the monastery; and God then wonderfully wrought, contrary to all human expectation, so that I was constrained to depart from Erfurt, and was called to Wittenberg, where, under God, I gave the devil, the pope of Rome, such a blow as no emperor, king, or potentate could have given him; yet it was not I, but God by me, his poor, weak, and unworthy instrument." Ever this consciousness of constraint and service, the feeling that it is not he that works, but the spirit of God that works by him. This greatest representative of individualism is precisely he from whose armory the opponents of the doctrine of freedom may get their most effective weapons. The very term free-will was odious to him, as seeming to endanger that doctrine of divine necessity which was to him the doctrine ever paramount and present.

X.

Always, the world's pomp and power on this hand: on that hand, for God's truth, one man! Yet not exactly so. Pomp and power, pope and emperor, diets and doctors,—these indeed on this hand; but, behind the one man on that hand, behind this prophet of God's truth and this fearless bearder of lions, the great warm heart and the ready right arm of the common people. The common people heard him gladly: they recognized the righteousness of his protest, they got new life and manhood in his sincerity, they exulted in his courage, they cheered him by their blessings and their pleadings, and they saw in his triumphs and his power bright visions of a better society and a larger life for themselves. So it has ever been since States began; while privilege has plotted with police, and priests and scribes have leagued together in God's name to crush the new truth which boded ill to their ancient, false-grown phrases and their reverend, comfortable prerogatives.

The honest souls among the clergy themselves rejoiced and admired the courageous monk. "He is the one that will do it," cried out one simple monk with joy, when he read

the theses: "he has come, for whom we have so long waited." And even the Abbot of Hersfeld received him with distinguished honors as he returned from Worms, in spite of ban and interdict. "He sent his chancellor and chamberlain to welcome me," writes Luther to Spalatin, "a league from town: he himself received me with a great retinue near his castle, and escorted me into the city. At the gates, I was greeted by the chief magistrate. In the monastery, I was gloriously lodged and entertained; the following morning at five o'clock, I was urged to preach, though I declined. The next day, the abbot accompanied us to the edge of the woods."

The nature of the popular feeling is well illustrated by the account of Luther's journey to Worms. His progress was a perpetual triumph. He set out with the prayers and good wishes of all the people of Wittenberg, in a carriage provided by the town council, the students and teachers of the university and many others being assembled to witness his departure, and hundreds of the students accompanying him beyond the city gates. As he passed through the towns and villages, the people came forth in numbers to greet him; and, at the hotels where he rested, crowds

thronged to see him. At Leipzig, a cup was presented him by the magistrates of the city. At Erfurt, he preached; and the church was crowded with his friends and the monks from his old convent. In Gotha and Eisenach, he also preached to enormous crowds. Everywhere, he was treated with the greatest consideration, the pride which the German people felt in their heroic champion being clouded only by their fears as to his fate. His entry into Worms, says one, was more like that of a warrior returning from battle than that of a criminal going to judgment. The town trumpeter, from his watch-tower, had announced the approach of the procession; and a great concourse was in waiting at the city gates. A thousand students, who had gathered to the great session, welcomed him with their greetings, and all the streets were thronged with people anxious to behold the man with whose bold defiance of the priests and powers they sympathized so heartily. Mothers lifted their infants high into the air. So great was the crowd that pressed to see him that he had to be conducted through back courts to his inn. As he stepped from his carriage and looked upon the great mass of people, shouting their encouragements and whispering their warnings,

his heart swelled within him, and he cried, "God will be upon my side." It was no longer his cause alone, but the cause of the people; and he felt the voice of the people to be the voice of God. Upon Luther's disappearance within the Wartburg, on his return from Worms, the public agitation was so great that one wrote to the Archbishop of Mainz: "The people are so much excited about it that I fear we shall scarce escape with our lives, if we do not everywhere seek him with lanterns and call him back again." "Is he yet alive or have they assassinated him?" writes Albrecht Dürer, in his diary, in Nuremberg, well expressing the popular anxiety. "If dead, then he has suffered for the sake of Christian truth and because he has punished the unchristian papacy. O God, if Luther is dead, who will henceforth so clearly proclaim to us the gospel?"

So it had been when the pope's bull, excommunicating him, came into Germany. We read that Cardinal Aleander, who brought the bull, was amazed at the attitude of the people. The papal authority had become so completely weakened that the anathema and interdict were received in Germany with shouts of laughter. Miltitz, who came before Alean-

der, confessed that he would not have dared to take Luther away with him to Rome, even if he had had an army of twenty-five thousand men. Aleander found the streets placarded with satirical ballads and pictures, directed against Italy and the pope, and himself the object of scorn, ridicule, street badinage, and threats. When the bull was posted in the towns, which the magistrates often refused to have done at all, it was immediately torn down and destroyed by the people. When Eck endeavored to promulgate the bull at Leipzig, the students seized and insulted him, and he fled for his life to Erfurt; but here, too, the students fell upon him, laid hold of the bull, and threw it into the river, crying, "It is a bubble: let it swim." When Luther himself burnt the bull at Wittenberg, it was the students who prepared the funeral pile, one of the magistrates of the town lighted it, and the bull was consumed, we read, amid the acclamations of the people. Several hundred students — the students were always on Luther's side — remained at the fire, feeding the flames with papal writings.

The Reformation was essentially a popular movement. The common people were its authors and finishers. The princes were glad

enough to catch so much of its wind as might help them free themselves from the humiliating temporal lordship of the pope; but their interest in the religious part of it, and especially in the rationalizing and liberalizing part of it, was usually slight enough, when not indeed negative and obstructive. This is notably true of England, through the whole period of Tudors and of Stuarts: it is only something less so of Europe almost altogether. The reason why Wiclif, in his time, enjoyed some measure of royal protection was not any royal enthusiasm for his more rational doctrine, but his potent arguments that the king might refuse to pay the irksome yearly tribute to Rome. The reason why Charles did not make an end of Luther, as he might easily have done, was that he knew that the revolt in Germany was a good sword to keep hanging over the head of the pope. Nowhere real religious motives and disinterestedness.* The noble exceptions will

*"One is tempted to speculate as to what might have happened, had Charles espoused the reforming cause. His reverence for the pope's person is sufficiently seen in the sack of Rome and the captivity of Clement; the traditions of his office might have led him to tread in the steps of the Henrys and the Fredericks, into which even the timid Lewis IV. and the unstable Sigismund had sometimes ventured; the awakening zeal of the German people, exasperated by the exactions of the Romish court, would have strengthened his hands and enabled him, while moderating the excesses of change, to fix his throne on the deep foundations of national love. It

occur to everybody. The support which Luther himself received from the Saxon princes must never be forgotten. Yet even their interest was as much political as religious; although, in their case, this, perhaps, is not to be said derogatorily.

Almost all of the leading reformers were men of humble origin, men whose fathers did not much outrank worthy Hans Luther of Mansfeld. "My father," said Latimer, "was a yeoman, and had no lands of his own, only he had a farm of three or four pounds by the year at the uttermost, and hereupon he tilled so much as kept half a dozen men." Cranmer's father is likewise described as "a yeoman." Zwingli's father was a shepherd. Melanchthon's parents were simple village people "in easy circumstances"; Reuchlin was Melanchthon's uncle. Knox's family was apparently of about the same sort as Melanchthon's. Calvin's father was Procureur-Fiscal of the district of Noyon, and secretary of the diocese,—a man of ability, distinguished by success in his profession, and the favor and friendship of the influential families of the neighborhood. Calvin came nearer being born into an aristocratic atmos-

may well be doubted—Englishmen, at least, have reason for the doubt—whether the Reformation would not have lost as much as it could have gained by being entangled in the meshes of royal patronage."—*Bryce.*

phere than any of his compeers of the Reformation, was even adopted to some extent by a certain noble family of the neighborhood, and pursued his studies in conjunction with those of the young members of this family. His tender bringing up was very unlike the rough schooling of the boy Luther, sometimes lashed fifteen times in the course of a single morning, by the Mansfeld schoolmaster, for not knowing what had never been taught him.

None of the great reformers was, by taste and temperament and training, as well as by doctrine, more a man of the people than Luther himself. His kindly nature and broad human sympathies, his own restiveness under authority, his impatience with dignities and punctilio, his unconcealed sense of superiority, on their own ground, to the princes and potentates with whom he had to do, his large and varied experience with all sorts and conditions of men, and especially with the sound, shrewd, serious and practical common people, his rough and sturdy common sense,—all this had as much to do as his theory of the universal priesthood of the faithful in making him a democrat. He was proud and strong, at the critical junctures of his life, in seeing that he was safe in the hearts of the people, whatever bans might come from Rome and

from the courts. He threw off the cowl of the monk, and assumed the habit of the citizen; and for this the people loved him as much as because he became a husband and a father, sanctifying the conception of marriage and the home,—as Rome, by its doctrine of the superior holiness of celibacy, had profaned it. He was proud to know himself rooted in the commonalty. He was proud of his honest, peasant father and mother, loved to welcome them to his table and the circle of his learned friends, embalmed their names, Hans and Gretchen, in the marriage service which he compiled for the Reformed Church, where they stand to this day as a memorial of his honor and affection. "I am a peasant's son," he used to say, with the same pride with which Chatham exclaimed to the nobles of the Cabinet, "It is the people who have sent me here." No peasant in Wittenberg or in all Germany who could not freely approach him, or who did not feel in his honor and greatness that he was honored, too. His very buffoonery made him dearer to the people, while bearing further witness to his democratic nature, as in the case of our own Lincoln, whose portrait altogether, as Emerson paints it, would well serve for Luther: "The great style of hero, which draws equally all classes,

all the extremes of society, till we say the very dogs believe in him,—a man who was at home and welcome with the humblest, and with a spirit and a practical vein in the times of terror that commanded the admiration of the wisest." The element of humor in Luther, so overmastering — precisely as in the case of Lincoln — as to throw him constantly to the very limits, and within the limits, of the vulgar, needs to be considered carefully, in order not to do him great injustice. "With all his robustness and earnestness," says a discriminating writer, "Luther's mind had a keen sense of humor, which even the most serious passages of his life could excite. The ludicrous side of any argument never escaped him, and he loved to give to grave discussions a quaint and comical turn. No theme was so grave, no dignity so high, no issue so momentous, that his satirical taste hesitated to deal with it. His friends were often shocked, his enemies amazed, at the style of his rejoinders. He almost invented for Germany a new vocabulary of grotesque and sarcastic terms. To many now, this is the most repulsive side of the reformer's character and spirit.* His most seri-

*The following passage from Luther's pamphlet in reply to King Henry VIII. of England, who engaged in theological controversy with him, well

ous writings seem at times profaned by their buffoonery. What is so charming and fresh in the extravagances and whims of the *Table-Talk* is far from agreeable in the discussion of themes which the reverence of ages should have hallowed. This tendency of Luther has given ample materials to his Catholic defamers to hold him up to contempt and scorn. His garbled

illustrates the coarse, abusive, and reckless style in which he frequently wrote. It serves, too, to show how the whole tone of controversy has changed in these centuries,—for Luther was only somewhat more violent than a hundred of his contemporaries; and it especially serves to illustrate the main point which we are here considering,—how slight respect he had for royalties and dignities. Whether it was King Henry of England or Hans Wurst of Wittenberg, with whom he was dealing, was all one to him.

"The Lord Henry, not by the grace of God, King of England, has written in Latin against my treatise. There are some who believe that this pamphlet of the king's did not emanate from the king's own pen; but whether Henry wrote or Hal, or the devil in hell, is nothing to the point. He who lies is a liar. My own notion about the matter is that Henry gave out an ell or two of coarse cloth, and that then this pituitous Thomist Lee, the follower of the Thomist herd, who in his presumption wrote against Erasmus, took scissors and made a cope of it. If a king of England spits his impudent lies in my face, I have a right in my turn to throw them back down his own throat. If he blasphemes my sacred doctrines, if he casts his filth at the throne of my monarch, my Christ, he need not be astonished at my defiling in like manner his royal diadem, and proclaiming him, king of England though he be, a liar and a rascal.... He thought to himself, Luther is so hunted about he will have no opportunity of replying to me: I need not fear to throw anything that comes first to hand in the poor monk's path. Ah! ah! my worthy Henry! you've reckoned without your host in this matter: you've had your say, and I'll have mine. You shall have truths that won't amuse you at all. I'll make you smart for your tricks. This excellent Henry accuses me of having written against the pope out of personal hatred and ill-will; of being snarlish and quarrelsome, backbiting, proud, and so conceited that I think myself the only man of sense in the world. I ask you, worthy Hal, what has my being conceited, snappish, and cross-grained, supposing I am so, to do with the question? Is the papacy free

writings are made to attest a low and sneering hatred of all holy things, and the cunning Jesuit is able to show how a blackguard was mistaken for a reformer. But the more candid critic, while he allows that the humor of Luther was not always of the most dignified sort, and that his style was lacking in refinement, will see in it the proof of a genial soul."

His good nature and pleasantry were invet-

from blame, because I am open to it? Is the king of England a wise man, because I suppose him to be a fool? Answer me that. . . . What most surprises me is not the ignorance of this Hal of England, not that he understands less about faith and works than a log of wood, but that the devil should trouble himself to make use of this man against me. King Henry justifies the proverb, 'Kings and princes are fools.' I shall say very little more about him at present; for I have the Bible to translate, and other important matters to attend to. On some future occasion, God willing, when I shall be more at leisure, I will reply at greater length to this royal driveler of lies and poison. . . . I imagine that he set about his book by way of penance; for his conscience is ever smiting him for having stolen the crown of England, having made way for himself by murdering the last scion of the royal line. . . . Hal and the pope have exactly the same legitimacy: the pope stole his tiara, as the king his crown; and therefore it is that they are as thick together as two mules in harness."

The thought of the king's rage on finding himself addressed in this manner evidently amuses and stimulates Luther as he writes. And this passage by no means shows the worst that he could do in this line,—is quite outdone by some of his diatribes against "the papal sow," "the pope-ass," and "the monk calf." "Nature," says Canon Mozley, "gives horns to bulls and hoofs to horses: to Luther, she gave a tongue. . . . As a controversialist, he was literally and wholly without decorum, conscience, taste, or fear. He did not know what it was to hesitate, to waver, upon an epithet or a gibe. There is no appearance in his style of his ever having once, in the whole of his controversial career, said to himself, Shall I say this or not? He said whatever he liked. He consulted strength alone. He was unscrupulously gross and foul-mouthed in his more solid vituperation: in his lighter banter there was that extremity of insolence which we notice in the

erate. How pleasant is the picture of those evening gatherings at the Black Eagle, where for fifteen years he was wont to meet his more intimate friends and, on the oaken benches, over the can of ale, discuss the creeds, politics and poetry, the pope, the devil and the Turk, man, woman, marriage and home, and everything in heaven and on earth and under the

derision of a sharp and low crowd at a hustings, choosing exactly, in their battery upon an obnoxious candidate, the terms and the style the most offensive to his self-respect."

Luther himself was perfectly conscious, in his quiet and reflective times, of this extravagance and violence in himself; and the reason which he gives for it is the true one. "I was born," he says, "to meet parties and demons hand to hand on the field of battle: therefore, my writings are full of war and tempest. I am the rough pioneer who has to prepare the ways and level the road. The master of arts, Philip [Melanchthon], advances calmly and gently; he cultivates and he plants; he sows and he waters joyfully according to the gifts which God has given him." This is just the truth of the matter. Luther was the rough pioneer, who had to prepare the way and level the road. Had he undertaken to do his work with a Damascus blade, instead of with axe and hammer, the work would not have been done at all. As one has said, he had no time to stop mouse-holes with cheese. "God gave the world at this time," said Melanchthon, using the words of Erasmus, "when grievous plagues and ills had gained the upper hand, a sharp and severe doctor." "Not even a religious revolution," says Heine, "can be made with orange blossom." It is easy for us, in the leisure of the afternoon, to criticise the Titan; but it is very doubtful whether everything we criticise did not serve a real and important end, and whether, considering the time and the task, the very things we most incline to count limitations were not inextricably bound up with what made him strong and triumphant. "Praise to Luther!" says Heine, "eternal praise to the dear man whom we have to thank for the deliverance of our most precious possessions, and on whose benefits our life still depends! It little becomes us to complain of the narrowness of his views. The dwarf standing on the shoulders of the giant can indeed see farther than his supporter, especially if he puts on spectacles; but to such a lofty survey is wanting the elevated feeling, the giant heart, to which we cannot lay claim. Still less does it become us to pronounce an

earth! His satire and merriment came out especially in his dealings with the church authorities, and here he appealed especially to the popular heart. On the Sunday morning after the arrival of the papal embassy in Wittenberg, in 1534, he sent early for his barber. "How comes it, Doctor," asked the man, "that you desire to be shaved so early?" Luther replied, "I am called to meet the ambassador of the holy father, the pope: hence, I must prepare and adorn myself to appear before him as if I were young; for then the legate will think, 'The deuce! if Luther in his youth has done us so much mischief, what may he not

austere judgment on his failings: these failings have profited us more than the virtues of a thousand others. Neither the subtilty of Erasmus nor the benignity of Melanchthon would ever have brought us so far as the divine brutality of Brother Martin."

It is to be seriously deplored, however,—disposed as we may be to excuse the vulgar tirades against Henry and the pope, the "jackass" which he bestowed on Pope Adrian, the "confounded lice" which he stuck to the Capuchins, the "peevish milk-sops" with which he mollified the cardinals, and the "detestable backbiters" which he hurled at Tetzel and his crew,—that Luther should have used the terms which he did use in controversy with his fellow-reformers, and especially with such men as Zwingli and Erasmus. Erasmus is "the vilest miscreant that ever disgraced the earth," the "enemy to true religion," "Christ's most bitter enemy," the "complete image of Epicurus," a "Momus," a "venomous serpent," an "accursed wretch." "Whenever I pray, I pray for a curse upon Erasmus." Carlstadt and Erasmus are lumped together as "mere hollow nuts, which foul the mouth." Zwingli is an "illiterate rustic," a "mere zealot," "without logic." "I wish from my heart Zwingli could be saved, but I fear the contrary." Everywhere, this small respect and generally violent abuse for his adversaries. Yet this is never born of any personal jealousy or envy. There was nothing of these in Luther's make-up. "Carlstadt wanted to be the great

do hereafter?'" As he rode to the meeting, accompanied by his friend Bugenhagen, he remarked laughingly, "Behold, here is the German pope and his cardinal Pommeranus!" At the time of the indulgence troubles, Tetzel taunted Luther with the offer of the trial of fire and water. "Your cries seem to me," answered Luther, "but empty braying. Instead of water, I commend to you the juice of the vine; and, in place of fire, inhale, my friend, the odor of good roast goose; and tell all your inquisitors, all your eaters of hot iron and splitters of rock, that I, Martin Luther, live at Wittenberg, and that they will find at

man; and truly I would willingly have left him the honor, so far as it had not been against God." This is wholly sincere. If Luther is arrogant, it is always the arrogance of the cause which he incarnates, and from which he cannot dissociate himself in thought. His deference and kindliness to his fellow-workers at Wittenberg and to all like-minded men are beautiful; and his friendship with Melanchthon is one of the notable friendships of time, like the friendship of David and Jonathan, of Lessing and Moses Mendelssohn, of Washington and Lafayette, of Goethe and Schiller, and of Carlyle and Emerson. "Luther," said Melanchthon, "is too great, too wonderful for me to depict in words. If there be a man on earth I love with my whole heart, that man is Luther. One is an interpreter, one a logician, another an orator, affluent and beautiful in speech, but Luther is all in all; whatever he writes, whatever he utters, pierces to the soul, fixes itself like arrows in the heart,—he is a miracle among men." Equally warm are Luther's words of Melanchthon. Not since David spoke over the body of Jonathan have words of more simple and touching pathos been uttered than those of Melanchthon's lament for Luther: "As when two travellers are journeying one and the same way, and, after they have gone a long while together, one of them should fall down dead and the other lament, so do I bewail my Luther. I had always believed that I should be the first to leave this world,—and now I must survive him!"

my house an open door, a table spread, good cheer, and a hearty welcome." A man once came from the Low Countries to dispute with him about all sorts of things. He remarks, "When I saw what a poor, ignorant creature he was, I said to him, 'Hadn't we better dispute over a can or two of beer?'" Luther was the farthest remove possible from the Puritan. His conviviality and general free and easy tone commended him all the more to the German people, though I cannot help feeling that it may have contributed its share toward that moral laxity which he had such occasion to deplore in a thousand places where the reformed doctrine and discipline went. We cannot well help liking his famous couplet:—

> "*Who loves not woman, wine and song,*
> *Remains a fool his whole life long.*"

It serves to emphasize the warm human nature of the man, and draws us the closer to him. Yet we somehow feel that even this is not just the thing that comes best from a great religious reformer; and, when we hear him exclaiming further, "We are all jolly fellows, we Germans: we eat and drink and sing, and break our glasses, and lose, at one sitting, a hundred or a thousand florins," the Puritan in us

comes down with sharp protest. Calvin and Milton, we are sure, are better than this.

But, if such words were not calculated to help the cause of religion, they did help Luther's personal popularity among the masses of the German people. They expressed with hearty honesty and gusto a very fundamental German feeling. Altogether, as has been well said, Luther, while not the absolute originator of the German character, is yet its striking and prophetic representative, the personifier of the nation. Heine says: "He was not only the greatest but the most German man of our history. In his character, all the faults and all the virtues of the Germans are combined on the largest scale; he represents in his own personality the wonderful German land." It was his pride that he was a German, and there was no other pride which he expressed so strongly or so often; and this, flattering their own pride as it did, served pre-eminently to make him the idol of the German people. "I was born for the good of my dear Germans," he said, "and I will never cease to serve them." The Germans were "more honest, right, and true" than all other people; the German language was "superior to all others." For popular effect, what could be conceived so sublime as his bursting

into German amid the Latinities of the Diet of Worms, and his final exclamation in the tongue of the people: "*Hier stehe ich. Ich kann nicht anders. Gott helfe mir*"?

Luther, like all scholars of the time, wrote fluently in Latin; but, unlike most, he wrote most gladly in the tongue of the people. It is worthy of remark that, while the names of so many luminaries of the time have come down to us, and are remembered in some classic form,— Gerhard turned into Erasmus, Heussgen into Ecolampadius, and Schwarzerd into Melanchthon,— this man's name brooked no Latinizing or Hellenizing process; always plain Martin Luther, just as Hans and Gretchen gave it to him there in Eisleben. It is not improper to call Luther the father of the modern German language. "He created the German language," says Heine.* His address "To the Christian

* "How Luther succeeded in creating the language into which he translated the Bible remains a mystery to me even to this hour. The old Swabian dialect had totally disappeared, along with the chivalrous poetry of the Hohenstaufen imperial era. The old Saxon dialect, so-called Low German, was in use throughout only a portion of Northern Germany; and, despite all efforts that have been made, it has never been found possible to adapt it to literary purposes. Modern Saxon never was a dialect of the Germans, as little was it so as Silesian,— the former, like the latter, having a strong Slavonian admixture. I, therefore, frankly confess that I know not what was the origin of the language we find in Luther's Bible. But this I know, that, through his Bible, which the new-born press, the black art, scattered by thousands of copies among the people, the Lutheran language spread in a few years over the whole of Germany, and was raised to

Nobility of the German Nation" is the earliest masterpiece of German prose; and never was a book so influential in shaping a language and a literature as Luther's translation of the Bible. Never was a man so fitted for such a task, combining as he did with so great learning such rare and sympathetic understanding of the common mind, and such genuine and high respect for the popular judgment and intelligence. The manuscript which still survives bears witness, by its corrections and re-corrections, to the infinite pains he took with his work, and how high a degree of importance he attached to it. We read that, when engaged in translating the descriptions of the slaughter of beasts for sacrifice, he got a butcher to kill some sheep for him, that he might learn what every part of a sheep was

the rank of a written tongue. This written tongue holds its place to this day in Germany, and gives to that politically and religiously dismembered nation (1833) a literary unity. Such an inestimable gain may well make amends to us for any loss in the later development of the language of that internal expressiveness we are accustomed to find in languages having their origin in a single dialect. There is no want, however, of such expressiveness in the language of Luther's Bible, and this old book is a perennial source of rejuvenescence for our tongue. Every expression and every idiom to be found in Luther's Bible is essentially German; an author may unhesitatingly employ it; and, as this book is in the hands of the poorest classes, they have no need of any special learned instruction to enable them to express themselves in a literary style. This circumstance will, when the political revolution takes place, result in strange phenomena. Liberty will everywhere be able to speak, and its speech will be Biblical." — *Heine.*

called; and so of much besides. "I made it my effort to avoid Hebraisms," he said. "The wise ones, who affect greater knowledge than myself on the subject, take me to task for a word here and there. Did they attempt the labor I have accomplished, I would find a hundred blunders in them for my one." "No fine, courtly words," he said to Spalatin. "This book can only be explained in a simple, popular style. It must be understood by the mother in the house, by the children in the streets, and by the common man in the market." The terms of court and palace he could not use, he said.

The translation of the Bible, everywhere a concomitant of the Reformation, is the noblest witness to the democracy of Protestantism. It proved the belief in the popular appeal. This confidence in the popular appeal, the great respect for it, and the deep sense of its importance, appear always in Luther. Before leaving Wittenberg for Worms, when he half-believed that he was going to his death, he devised with his friend Lucas Cranach, the artist, what he called "a good book for the laity,"—a series of woodcuts depicting contrasts between Christ and the pope, with explanations in pithy German: Christ washing the disciples' feet on one

page, the pope holding out his toe to be kissed on the other; Christ bearing his cross, the pope carried in state through Rome on men's shoulders; Christ driving money-changers out of the temple, the pope selling indulgences, with piles of money before him; and so on.

Another constant and sublime witness to the democracy of Protestantism has been its faith in popular education and its devotion to it. And here, too, Luther took the lead. "Luther," says a German writer, "was not only the renewer of the religious life of the German people, but he was also the father and creator of its common schools, that gigantic tree whose branches have spread over all Germany, and it may fairly be said over all Protestantism, scattering blessings over all classes of society, to the glory of God and the welfare of mankind." If the Reformation is to succeed, Luther said, the young must be educated. He published an address in 1524, "To the Councillors of all the Cities in Germany, to establish and maintain Christian Schools." This had reference to secondary or Latin schools. He addressed himself with equal zeal to the question of university education and university reform. He advocated the thorough education of women. This flowed directly from the Protestant doc-

trine,—a soul is a soul now, and even Christian women are priests. He insisted that common schools should be established everywhere, and that education be compulsory. He effected an utter revolution in school administration. "The schoolmasters in my day," he said, speaking of his boyhood, "were tyrants and executioners; the schools were jails and hells; and, in spite of fear and misery, floggings and tremblings, nothing was learned. The young people were treated altogether too severely, so that they might well have been called martyrs. Time was wasted over many useless things, and thus many an able mind was ruined." Men should discern, he said, "the different dispositions, according to which all punishment should be administered; for we ought to punish so that the apple go hand in hand with the rod." This might well be a sentence from Roger Ascham's *Schoolmaster*. The history of modern pedagogy should begin not with Ascham or Comenius, but with Martin Luther.*

Luther was a great popular preacher. He valued the pulpit more than the professor's

* It was with good reason that the great reformers laid stress on education, for the Reformation was begun and carried on so completely by *scholars* that it has been with much justice called an academic movement. Wiclif and Huss also, the great "reformers before the Reformation," were celebrated university professors.

chair; and it was in the pulpit, addressing the multitude, that he was most powerful. He loved to preach. For years, he preached three times in the week. He would preach when he was sick, and never with more power than then. He deeply felt the responsibility of the office. His knees often trembled beneath him as he mounted the pulpit, but not for fear of men. "What do I care that men say I don't know how to preach? My only fear is that, before God, I shall pass for not having worthily spoken of his great majesty and his royal works." The sermons are often coarse enough, full of personalities and sarcasm, but always with a solemn and awful background, and surcharged with earnestness. His first and constant consideration is the condition and the needs of the common people. He aims at absolute simplicity, and scathingly rebukes all pulpit pedantry. "I would not have preachers in their sermons use Hebrew, Greek, or foreign words; for, in the church, we ought to speak, as we use to do at home, the plain mother-tongue which every one is acquainted with." "When they come to me, to Melanchthon, to Dr. Pomer, etc., let them show their cunning, how learned they be: they shall be well put to their trumps. But to sprinkle out

Hebrew, Greek and Latin in their public sermons savors merely of show, according with neither time nor place." "We ought to direct ourselves in preaching," he said, "according to the condition of the hearers; but most preachers commonly fail herein: they preach that which little edifies the poor, simple people. Christ talks of tilling ground, of mustard-seed, etc.; he used altogether homely and simple similitudes." "When I preach," he says again, "*I sink myself deep down.** I regard neither Doctors nor Magistrates, of whom are here in this church above forty; but I have an eye to the multitude of young people, children and servants, of whom are more than two thousand."

All this, it will be clearly seen, describes the democrat; and democrat, precisely, Luther was. Never was a man so splendidly endowed as he with every element to make a great popular leader. Had he been an unscrupulous man, he might have been the prince of demagogues. He was a conscientious man of the people; and

* The phrase reminds us of those lines of Lowell's: —

"I love society,
Nor seldom find the best with simple souls
Unswerved by culture from their native bent,
The ground we meet on being primal man
And nearer *the deep bases of our lives.*"

he labored faithfully, through evil report and good report, with such amount of knowledge and insight as he had, for what he sincerely believed to be for the genuine good of the people and for true liberty. It has often been pointed out, and justly, that it has not been the Protestant doctrine in its Lutheran form which has carried liberty to the nations, and built republics, but in its Calvinist form. Calvinism became the religion of the Huguenots in France, of the Covenanters in Scotland, of the Puritans in England, and the religion of New England and America. Where Lutheranism became instituted, there nations have not come to their political majority, but have remained resigned to absolutism or paternalism. Bancroft urges this in his well-known passage upon the Calvinism of the Puritans; and the reason which he intimates is the true one. "Both Luther and Calvin," he says, "brought the individual into immediate relation with God; but Calvin, under a militant form of doctrine, brought him into immediate dependence on God.... Luther spared the altar, and hesitated to deny totally the real presence: Calvin, with superior dialectics, accepted as a commemoration and a seal the rites which the Catholics revered as a sacrifice. Luther favored magnifi-

cence in public worship, as an aid to devotion: Calvin, the guide of republics, avoided in his churches all appeals to the senses, as a peril to pure religion. . . . Luther permitted the cross and the taper, pictures and images, as things of indifference: Calvin demanded a spiritual worship in its utmost purity. Luther, not from his own choice, but from the overruling necessities of his position, left the organization of the Church to princes and governments: Calvin reformed doctrine, ritual, and practice, and, by establishing ruling elders in each church and an elective synod, he secured to his polity a representative character, which combined authority with popular rights. Both Luther and Calvin insisted that for each one there can be no other priest than himself; and, as a consequence, both agreed in the parity of the clergy. Both were of one mind that, should pious laymen choose one of their number to be their minister, 'the man so chosen would be as truly a priest as if all the bishops in the world had consecrated him.'" *

*With reference to doctrines of "succession," Luther speaks as follows: "Where God's word is purely taught there is the upright and true Church; for the true Church is supported by the Holy Ghost, not by succession of inheritance. It does not follow, though St. Peter had been bishop at Rome, and at the same time Christian communion had been at Rome, that therefore the pope and the Romish Church are true; for, if that should be of value or conclusive, then they must needs confess that Caiaphas, Annas and

The relinquishment of everything sacramentarian and ritualistic, the more direct throwing of the soul on God, the nakedness in which it set all souls in the presence of God,—this it was in Calvinism which promoted those principles of equality which must needs eventuate in the republic. But the man Calvin was by no means so truly a democrat as was Luther; while the consistorial or Presbyterian polity which he himself established in Geneva, and which realized his ideal, was not a democratic polity at all, but an aristocratic polity. Luther, in nothing a logical practitioner like Calvin, never stickling to realize ideals, but always dealing roughly and politically, cutting his garment according to his cloth, really held a theory of the Christian man and of the Church which, put into logical practice, would have given Congregationalism. He adopted the mixture of the episcopate* and the consistory which has continued in the Lutheran

the Sadducees were also the true Church; for they boasted that they were descended from Aaron." And of the Church councils he speaks thus: "Ah, Lord God! what are councils and conventions but grasping and vanity, wherein men dispute about titles, honors, precedence and other fopperies? Let us consider what has been done by these councils in three hundred years: nothing but what concerns externals and ceremonies; nothing at all touching true divine doctrine, the upright worship of God, or faith." "God's worship," he said, "consists in the plain, simple truth."

* I say episcopate, of course, under correction. The *general superintendents* in the Lutheran Church perform much the same office and have

Church simply for political reasons, with reference to the particular conditions of the time; but the very pure congregational theory proposed by Francis Lambert was confessedly much nearer his ideal. He felt that it was a plan which might be adopted at a later stage of the Reformation; but the times and circumstances were not ripe for it, to his thinking, in 1527, even for Hesse alone. And, to his thinking, they got no riper for it at any time during the rest of his life. Indeed, during those later years, he grew steadily more conservative, unwilling to initiate any bold new departure, somewhat anxious as to whither the principles which he had let loose might hurry men. The Peasants' War and Carlstadt's iconoclasm troubled and alarmed him, and he evidently felt that it was time to take in sail and go slowly, commanding content with the distance already achieved until some calm should give a chance for a clear new reckoning. So it has been of the later years of a hundred great reformers, smaller only than Luther. So it was not of our English Wiclif, Luther's great forerunner, whose last days were his most progressive and prophetic days. In a word, Luther had finished

substantially the same standing as the bishops in the Methodist Episcopal Church of America. Neither constitutes another *order* in the ministry, but both are simply *primi inter pares*.

the work which it was given him to do. He had fought a good fight, and had kept his faith. His vision had extended farther beyond the vision of his age than that of almost any man who ever lived; he had done more than almost any other to move the world forward. But he had reached the limits of his vision; and the next distinct and radical movement forward was to be the work of other men, in another age.

XI.

And here comes one and another, and says that Luther, whom we call democrat and man of the people, was not this at all. Rather, says this one, in hot and angry pamphlet, a friend of despotism and oppression, a fiend against humanity and liberty, the lackey of princes and courts. Once, indeed, we are told, when yet young and an obscure monk, poor and "hungry," this same Luther said that the people had a right to rebel against the dominating institutions, when they were iniquitous; *but*, having risen in the world, having gotten on and up, having become a "high-toned gentleman," being "well-fed and salaried," he becomes the willing servant and tool of the heartless aris-

tocracy, in whose favor he grew great and fat, against the rights and aspirations of the poor.

Ah, good friend, you have yet a long road to travel, to the point whence history is interpreted, and the motives which impel great men. You have companied too much with minor prophets, and are stuck in sorry categories. You will learn that no man gets very far in this God's world, that none becomes a great and lasting force in it, to whom it is safe to apply the categories of "good feed" and "salary," with the expectation of explaining anything thereby. It is to be advised that you give up that hypothesis altogether, and very especially that you cease its use many degrees this side of men of the size of Martin Luther. Learn, too, that "high-tone" becomes a very low thing and invisible, at a very early stage in the course of any real man. "Good feed" and "salary"! "The world," said Luther, "is too poor to give me satisfaction." What to a man in whose mind templed the thought of the Reformation were all the beef and bullion of all the Saxon Electors, that independence and conviction should be bartered for them? Ah, no. Had "good feed" and "salary" been an object, there was a much shorter cut to them than through the fires of Augsburg and Worms. A

snug bishopric would have settled all that. Bishop Luther were a being of very easy creation, and had been well-fed and salaried to a degree that poor Dr. Luther of Wittenberg and Zeilsdorf farm never dreamed of. Poor, I say; for Martin Luther, the miner's son, lived and died as poor as he was born, and left his wife a beggar. At the very height of his popularity and power, when he was the counsellor and director of princes and swayed the destiny of Europe, he was often so pitifully poor that he was at loss how to supply the absolute necessities of life. This was owing in part, very truly, to his own improvidence and careless use of the money which he had; but it was chiefly because he did not have much money at all. All that he did have was always freely divided with the alms-seekers, who forever beset him, drawn by his notorious generosity. His manner of life was to the end as simple as that of his peasant father in Mansfeld. "The unpretending plainness of his whole way of living," says no hot panegyrist, writing of the things which endeared him to the people, "always bordering on actual poverty and want, but borne with the most cheerful indifference, was a constant memento in his favor. The leader of the age and the adviser of princes, affecting no station and

courting no great men, was externally one of the common crowd, and the plainest of it."

Dismissing, then, these despicable categories of "high-tone," "good feed," and "salary," which accuse whoever uses them, let us consider seriously, nothing extenuating and setting down naught in malice, Luther's part with reference to this Peasants' War; for it is with reference to his part in this that we are told he proved himself the lackey of princes and traitor to humanity.

Be it premised — for obtuseness seems to make such premises still necessary — that 1525 was two centuries and a half before 1776, and a yet longer time before 1789, and that a man's treason to humanity in 1525 is not to be measured by his deviation from conceptions of government and popular rights which first found expression in the grand generalities, still prophetic, of the American and French Revolutions. The Peasants' War anticipated in almost every feature the French Revolution. The attitude of Luther in the one was not essentially unlike — and this in 1525 — the attitude, in the other, of Lafayette.

As has been many times remarked, the German Reformation is made up of three or four great movements, in some sort separate, and

yet so related and interdependent that one can never be considered carefully without studying the others. The reformation of religion and the revolt from Rome are indissolubly joined to the new movement in the universities and in general learning, and all to the sudden strong assertion of a genuine national spirit, as well as to the development, in all directions, of democratic tendencies opposed to the old feudal and aristocratic organization of society. When Luther spoke his first bold word against the pope, he immediately raised to a white heat every enthusiasm and every noble aspiration in Germany. Ulrich von Hutten and the humanists recognized him as their leader; Franz von Sickingen and the free knights hailed him as their ally; and hope sprang up in the hearts of the poor down-trodden peasants that he might be the Messiah who should help them free themselves from the unbearable miseries of their lot. The denial of an arbitrary authority in one thing was the presage of its denial in another; and if reason was to rule in religion and the Church, so should it rule in society and government. After the Leipzig disputation, it has properly been said, Luther found himself not simply a mover in ecclesiastical and doctrinal reform, but the leader of the German nation.

Out of all this seething came the Peasants' Insurrection. It would have come, says one, if Luther had never been born and Protestantism never preached. It was the angry upleaping of down-trodden men, who could endure their miseries no longer. I think not so. Their miseries were no greater than those of many patient generations before them, nor than the miseries of thousands in our own day, who live on in resignation. This, rather, is the deeper and the real truth. Man never rises into sincere and original relations with God, never has a new birth in religion, without also having a genuine revival of enthusiasm for humanity and a larger and loftier social ideal. Along with a nobler theology comes always and inevitably, as a very part of itself, a nobler conception of the commonwealth. The Mosaic monotheism brings the Mosaic theocracy; and he has not yet come near to the heart of Christ, who has not found that he is not more inspired by the consciousness that God is in him than by the vision of the kingdom of God on the earth. Plato's Republic, Augustine's City of God, Bacon's New Atlantis, Utopia, Arcadia, Sybaris, Brook Farm,—all these record the longings for a better society, which straightway seize the man who has been

moved to nobler speculation and to a new and vital consciousness of the grandeur of the soul. He poorly studies Calvin's *Institutes*, who neglects the Genevan Republic; and the sublimity of Puritan piety is never known to him who can laugh at Puritan legislation, mistaken and practically mischievous as it so often proved.

When, therefore, Luther's mighty hammer fell upon the bell that knelled at once the death of priest and pope, and rang in, to an enslaved and thirsty nation, the gospel of original relations with God once more,—in that sound, and in the simplest catch-words of that gospel, wrongs and injustice, which had been silently and hopelessly endured before, now appeared ten times unjuster, more irrational and intolerable, and the mad mob flew to arms.

"The brute despair of trampled centuries
Leaped up with one hoarse yell and snapped its bands,
Groped for its right with horny, callous hands,
And stared around for God with bloodshot eyes.
What wonder if those palms were all too hard
For nice distinctions,—if that mænad throng—
They whose thick atmosphere no bard
Had shivered with the lightning of his song,
Brutes with the memories and desires of men,
Whose chronicles were writ with iron pen,
In the crooked shoulder and the forehead low,—
Set wrong to balance wrong,
And physicked woe with woe?"

The more moderate party among the revolutionists published their program and demands in twelve notable articles, at the same time declaring that they did not wish for war, and asked nothing that was not in accordance with the gospel. They raised their voice to God, who saved the people of Israel; and they believed that God could save them from their powerful oppressors, as he did Israel from the hand of Pharaoh. The following were their twelve articles: (1) the whole congregation to have power to elect their minister, and, if he was found unworthy, to dismiss him; (2) the great tithe, *i.e.*, the legal tithe of corn, to be still payable for the maintenance of the pastor, and what is over to go to support the poor; the small tithes to be no longer payable; (3) serfdom abolished, since Christ has redeemed us all by his precious blood; (4) game, fish, and fowl to be free as God created them; (5) the rich have appropriated the forests,—this to be rearranged; (6) compulsory service to be abolished,—wages for work; (7) peasant service to be limited by contract, and work done above contract to be paid for; (8) fair rents; (9) arbitrary punishment abolished; (10) the commons restored; (11) the right of heriot, *i.e.*, the right of the lord to take the vassal's best chattel, to

be abolished; (12) all these propositions to be tested by Scripture, and what cannot stand the test to be rejected.

That which must chiefly impress every liberal man to-day, in reading these demands of the peasants, is their exceeding moderation. Most impartial historians, knowing the times, agree that the demands were just; and most of them have since become law in Germany. Luther said, addressing the German nobility with reference to the articles, "Some of them contain demands so obviously just, that the mere circumstance of their requiring to be brought forward dishonors you before God and man." His word concerning the article demanding free election of their pastors by the congregations has been already cited. "Again," he said, "the articles which have reference to the material condition and welfare of the peasants — to the fines, inheritance, imposts, the exaction of harsh, feudal services, and so forth — are equally founded in justice; for government was not instituted for its own ends, nor to make use of the persons subject to it for the accomplishment of its own caprices and evil passions, but for the interests and the advantage of the people. Now, the people have become fully impressed with this fact, and will no longer

tolerate your shameful extortions. Of what benefit were it to a peasant that his field should produce as many florins as it does grains of corn, if his aristocratic master may despoil him of the produce, and lavish, like dirt, the money he has thus derived from his vassal in fine clothes, fine castles, fine eating, and drinking?" "I myself," he said, "have many articles, even still more important ones, perhaps, that I might present against you in reference to the government of Germany, such as I did draw up in my book addressed to the German nobility. But my words passed unheeded by you like the wind."

Luther's unfeigned and hearty sympathies were with the peasants throughout. He speaks in the same emphatic language of the justice of their claims before the war, during the war, and after the war. With the very words in which he supports the rulers in suppressing the rebellion he mingles the bitterest condemnation of their oppression and exactions, which had provoked it; and at the end, contemplating in a horror from which he never recovered the hundred thousand slaughtered victims, he cried: "The spirit of these tyrants is powerless, cowardly, estranged from every honest thought. They deserve to be the slaves of the people."

Luther had little superstition about the persons of princes,—almost no man of his time who had less; but he had a feeling, which it is hard for us of this post-revolutionary age even to understand, of the sanctity of constituted authority. Above all, he was a conscientious and firm believer in the doctrine of non-resistance. He believed this to be the injunction of Christ; and moreover, rightly or wrongly, he sincerely believed it, on rational grounds, to be the highest wisdom and virtue. As he coupled his support of the rulers in suppressing the revolt with bitter condemnation of their tyranny, so he had coupled his bold advocacy of the claims of the peasants with the command that they should not resort to violence to enforce them, and the distinct assurance that he could not stand by them, if they did. This he had done not simply on the eve of war, but from the first and constantly. Be Luther open to whatever criticism for short-sightedness and error in this unhappy episode, he is not open to the charge of inconsistency.

Luther, I say, was no fearer or flatterer of princes. Let that idea, as one calculated to explain anything in the Peasants' War, be straightway dropped. We have already seen something of his style of flattering princes and

of the sort of superstition with which he viewed their persons. In dealing with King Henry VIII., he was not a bit the bolder by reason of the English Channel. It was in a perfectly general way that he said that "princes have mostly been the greatest blockheads and the wickedest rascals," with "hearts of stone and heads of brass," and that he advised them, as he did, to "go to hell"; and he was as scornful often in his dealings with the German princes, from emperor down to dukes, as in his dealings with the king of England. "Would that Charles were a man!" he cried out once, concerning the emperor; and he ever had upon his lips the psalmist's word, "Put not your trust in princes." The idleness and indulgence of the nobles, in the midst of the suffering and toil of the peasantry, is the constant subject of his criticism and of his amazement. On one occasion, while in his retirement at the Wartburg, he was persuaded to join a hunting party of the knights. "I have been on a hunt for the past two days," he writes to Spalatin, "and have tasted of that bitter-sweet enjoyment of our noble lords! We got two rabbits and a couple of poor partridges. A worthy occupation, in truth, for idle people!" He seems to have occupied himself chiefly in thinking what the

matter parabled. "The picture teaches nothing else than that the devil, through his godless masters and dogs,—the bishops and theologians,—secretly hunts and catches the innocent little animals,—the common people." As to his fear of princes, that finds good comment in his word to the Elector Frederick, as he left the Wartburg. The Elector had warned him that Duke George of Saxony, a violent enemy of the Reformation, would immediately execute the imperial ban, if Luther should appear in Leipzig. "If things were at Leipzig as they are at Wittenberg," said Luther, "I would go there, if it rained Duke Georges for nine days running, and every one of them nine times as fierce as he. Duke George is not equivalent to even a single devil. And, since the Father of mercies hath made us lords over death and all devils, it would be the highest reproach unto him, did we not believe that we are also lords over Duke George's wrath." Declining the Elector's offer to protect him on his journey, he said: "I am going to Wittenberg under much higher protection than the Elector's. Indeed, I am inclined to think that I can protect the Elector more and better than he can me. No sword can help this cause of mine. God alone can help without any human co-operation."

Luther believed that temporal government has a basis of divine authority, that the powers that be are ordained of God,—but this by no means so construed as to justify absolutism or unconditional submission to tyrannous or irrational government. "It is for us a law and duty," he said, with pointed reference to possible political collisions in Germany, "to defend our rights against maleficent power." "A Christian," he said, "is composed of two kinds of persons, a spiritual person and a civil person. The believing or spiritual person ought to endure and suffer all things; but the temporal and civil person must maintain and defend itself, as the laws command.* Christ and the gospel do not abolish temporal rights and ordinances, but confirm them." "The emperor," he said, "is not an absolute monarch, governing alone and at his pleasure; he has neither power nor authority alone to make laws and ordinances, much less has he power, right, or authority to draw the sword for the subjugation

*This distinction, which is, however, a very obvious one, is illustrated by the following passage from the *Table-Talk*: "If a robber on the highway should fall upon me, truly I would be judge and prince myself, and would use my sword, because nobody was with me, able to defend me; and I should think I had accomplished a good work. But, if one fell upon me as a preacher for the gospel's sake, then with folded hands I would lift up mine eyes to heaven, and say: 'My Lord Christ, here I am. I have confessed and preached thee. Is now my time expired? So I commit my spirit into thy hands.' And in that way would I die."

of the subjects and members of the empire without the sanction of the law or the knowledge and consent of the whole empire. . . . I would willingly argue this matter at length, whether we may resist the emperor or no. . . . These times are not the times of Diocletian. The emperor's authority and power, without the seven princes electors, is of no value. The emperor rules upon certain conditions. If the emperor with tyranny deals contrary to equity and justice, he thereby lays aside the person of a governor, and loses his right over the subjects by the nature of relatives; for princes and subjects are equally bound, the one to the other, and a prince is clearly obliged to perform what he has sworn and promised, according to the proverb, Faithful master, faithful man. The laws are above a prince."

These general principles of Luther it is necessary to grasp firmly and to keep constantly in mind, in considering his relation to the Peasants' War. There is very much foolish and misleading talk about his doctrine of the "divine right" of princes, in this connection. A doctrine of the divine basis and authority of government he did hold; but how he held it will be justly understood only when it is remembered that he expounded it precisely in connection with the passages just quoted.

Long before the peasants took up arms, Luther foresaw the storm, and warned the nobles of the danger which impended, if concessions were not made. Already, in 1552, he predicted a general revolt in German lands. A year before the outbreak of the war, he said: "The laboring man, tried beyond all endurance, overwhelmed with intolerable burdens, will not and cannot any longer tamely submit; and he has doubtless good reasons for striking with the flail and the club, as Hans Pitchfork threatens to do. I am delighted so far to see the tyrants trembling." Even when the rising of the peasants and their allies in the towns had actually begun, he wrote: "For such insurrection we have to thank you, ye princes and lords, ye purblind bishops and mad monks!... You fleece and skin the people until they can bear it no longer. But the sword is now at your throat!... You still think you are in the saddle: you will be lifted from it. If these peasants cannot do it, others will. And, though ye beat them all, they yet are unbeaten. God will raise up new ones; for he means to destroy you, and destroy you he will. It is not peasants that rise against you, my dear lords: it is God himself, who will punish your tyrannic madness!... Cease your exactions, cease your cruel

despotism! . . . Use gentle means, lest the spark now lighted, extending itself gradually all round and catching at point after point, should produce throughout Germany a conflagration which nothing can extinguish. You will lose nothing by gentleness; and, even though you were to lose some trifling matter, the blessings of peace would make it up to you a hundred-fold. Resort to war, and you may all of you be swallowed up, body and goods."

It is worthy of remark that, while Luther is accused so loudly to-day of lack of sympathy with the peasants, the chief accusation against him in his own day was that of having incited the revolt. In England, by such men as Sir Thomas More, he was identified with the insurrection, even when he was struggling against it; and, in Germany, he was compelled explicitly to defend himself as a champion of constituted government and law. Our slight and peppery German-American socialists scold at Luther celebrations, because, forsooth, kaiser and chancellor and court-chaplains join in them in the Fatherland, and as though there were no relation under heaven in which a great man could be viewed but his relation to their own quarrel. They would do well to note that the only notable or living words at Luther celebrations, either in

Germany or elsewhere, are the words not of courtiers or conservatives, but of liberal men, who truly see whither Luther's face was turned, and are careless about where he stood; and they might also profitably remember that, under the late king of Prussia, Luther's political writings were seized by the police authorities and their circulation prohibited,—not, presumably, on account of their reactionary tendency.

At the same time that Luther was so severely rebuking the nobles, he published an address to the peasants, condemning the insurrection, declaring that anarchy was a worse evil than any other, and that they might not count on his support in the resort to violence. He advised that arbiters should be chosen, some from the nobility and some from the towns, that both parties should give up something, and that the matter should be amicably settled. But he was too late. The insurgents were already in motion, marching "to the music of the Marseillaise hymns of the day." Under the watchword of "No quarter to idle men," they massacred all the nobles who fell into their hands. In Franconia alone, they pillaged and burned two hundred and ninety-three monasteries; and the more reckless of them preached open communism, demanding that whoever among the

princes or nobles would not consent to this should be hanged.

Luther now turned upon the peasants in most violent and unmeasured wrath, and threw his whole influence upon the side of the existing authorities until the insurrection was suppressed. It is for this that he is condemned. Had he joined the revolutionists, it is said, firmly supporting them in their use of force against acknowledged wrong, checking their excesses, and regulating their whole action as, with his great prestige and by right of his powerful leadership, he might well have done, he would have compelled the princes to yield, and wrought the political regeneration of Germany,— have saved Germany at least two painful centuries, and identified the Reformation with the cause of political progress, instead of having exposed himself and his doctrine to the reproach of collusion with privilege and aristocracy.

Who shall say? It is the old question of Cromwell and Vane. It is the question of Harper's Ferry. "It was a question," says Carlyle, "which theoretical constitution builders may find easy to answer; but to Cromwell, looking there into the real practical facts of it, there could be none more complicated. For

three years, Cromwell says, this question had been sounded in the ears of the Parliament. They could make no answer; nothing but talk, talk. Nevertheless, the question must and shall be answered. You sixty men there, becoming fast odious, even despicable, to the whole nation, whom the nation already calls Rump Parliament, *you* cannot continue to sit there: who or what then is to follow? 'Free Parliament,' right of Election, Constitutional Formulas of one sort or the other,—the thing is a hungry Fact coming on us, which we must answer or be devoured by it! And who are you that prate of Constitutional Formulas, rights of Parliament? You have had to kill your king, to make Pride's Purges, to expel and banish by the law of the stronger whosoever would not let your Cause prosper. . . . Tell us what we shall do; not in the way of Formula, but of practicable Fact!" He knew what he would do. He turned them out, locked the door and put the key in his pocket, and took the government of England into his own hands. "Reform Bill, free suffrage of Englishmen? Why, the Royalists themselves, silenced indeed but not exterminated, perhaps out*number* us. The great numerical majority of England was always indifferent to our Cause, merely looked at it and submitted to it.

It is in weight and force, not by counting of heads, that we are the majority! And now, with your Formulas and Reform Bills, the whole matter, sorely won by our swords, shall again launch itself to sea; become a mere hope and likelihood, *small* even as a likelihood! And it is not a likelihood; it is a certainty, which we have won, by God's strength and our own right hands, and do now hold *here*. Cromwell walked down to these refractory members; interrupted them in that rapid speed of their Reform Bill; ordered them to be gone, and talk there no more. Can we not forgive him? Can we not understand him? John Milton, who looked on it all near at hand, could applaud him." An end to all hope of the republic, and despotism instead,— despotism of brains and virtue, indeed, but despotism; and, with it, law and order, prosperity and peace. Yes, whispers Vane's pure spirit,— and 1660! Luther stopped anarchy, you say, in 1525; but here loom the Thirty Years' War and the two dead centuries! Ah, who shall predicate the sequence, who so backcast the years, and with omniscience mass contingencies? Emerson and Parker and Victor Hugo we conclude to have been true prophets, in divining that John Brown was the servant of a higher law than any that ruled in Virginia

in 1859. But who shall say that he who, in 1859, condemned Harper's Ferry, not simply as mistaken, but as wrong, was a lackey of slaveholders and a traitor to humanity? Yet between the Peasants' War and Harper's Ferry lay all the didactic revolutions and democracy of the three most democratic and revolutionary centuries of history.

This is not a question of political prescience and practical sagacity, but of motive and spirit; and the more deeply the circumstances of the Peasants' War are studied, the more noble will Luther's general attitude appear. The demand that he should have put himself at the head of a general armed uprising of the German people wildly ignores the fact that, colossal and many-sided as he was, his special work in this world was not that of a politician, but of a reformer of religion; while the boldness with which he stood by the peasants up to the last moment, in every demand and deed which it was possible for him to countenance, appears all the nobler in the light of his constant painful consciousness that every popular excess brought disgrace and disaster to the cause of the Reformation, which was paramount to all else with him, and which every croaker in all Europe was laboring to prove the cause of license.

The fundamental principle on which Luther acted was the principle of non-resistance. If he had one conviction firmer than others, it was that the sword should never be used in propagation of the truth. "It is through the Word, and not by force," he loved to say, "that wisdom governs." "I will preach, I will talk, I will write," he said; "but I will not use force or compulsion with any one." His training in the quietistic school of Tauler and the *Theologia Germanica* doubtless did much to strengthen this feeling in him; but it was a very fundamental and pervading feeling. The principle constantly controlled him, whether it was his own personal cause that was concerned or a more general one. "You are blameless before God," he said to Frederick, declining any forcible interposition on his part, "whether I am imprisoned or killed. As elector, you are to be obedient to the superior authority, and suffer His Imperial Majesty to rule in city and country, according to the laws of the empire. You are not to defend me, or to resist or to interpose any hindrance whatsoever against the power that is seeking to capture or to kill me. For no one is entitled to resist the powers that be save Him who ordained the same: otherwise, it would be rebellion, and against God."

What shall we say of this? Had this principle obtained, says this one, this America would be to-day a British colony, France would still be under the heel of Bourbons and of Rome, and every movement which in these centuries we count most brilliant and beneficent, every movement wherein men have risen, scorning slavery, and driven a new stake for liberty and civilization, would be blotted from the page of history. And this seems to be the truth of the matter. Yet Christianity, it is urged, approves this doctrine of non-resistance, — the doctrine is fundamental to it. There is a certain sort of "radicals," — by the same token, an ignoble, poverty-stricken sort, not radicals at all, but labials, — whose chief joy and sustenance is in crowding Christ into a corner; and here is an antinomy, a *reductio ad absurdum*, after their own hearts, — and they write vigorous, virtuous essays upon Christianity *versus* Civilization. As concerns Christ, neither he nor any soul of his type can be crowded into a corner. Here, as everywhere else, it appears that his work was not to give men formulas, but a principle of life; and the decision of each practical problem is thrown back on the individual conscience, just as it was before, and as it ever will be to the end of time. If we read

"Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also," and "He that takes the sword shall perish by the sword," we also read, "He made a scourge of small cords, and drove them all out of the temple." This latter is a myth, say the new critics,—an interpolation; and Luther, when it was urged upon him during this very Peasants' War, was forced to dispose of it arbitrarily: "Christ did many things which we neither may nor can do after him. He walked upon the water," etc. But a myth, it should be remembered, if this be a myth, is almost always as fatally true to character as history itself; and Luther, in simply ignoring this genuine Christian element, thereby proved himself so much less than Christ. Yet Luther only makes exclusive the principle which with Christ is certainly almost so, and the principle upon which it seems more and more exclusive stress is to be laid as civilization advances. It is a deep, far-reaching principle, this of "the irresistible might of meekness," as Milton so beautifully calls it, and commonly but shallowly and poorly apprehended. It is the principle of absolute faith in intellect, the belief that man is, after all, so nobly constituted that he will not and cannot permanently or long resist the naked, unsup-

ported right; the belief that, though we for truth's sake submit to wrong and crucifixion rather than strike the blow, to-morrow's sure reflection, repentance and rebuke shall do more to establish the truth which we have suffered for than any blow could do. It is a principle, say those who cherish it, whose beneficence may not appear in short perspective; but, had good men been faithful to it through the centuries, the virtue and the civilization of the world to-day would be much greater than they are. That no generation has been willing to adopt it and bear the burden is but a proof of men's small faith in spirit and of their slowness to self-sacrifice for universal ends.

I cannot, for my own part, accept this principle of non-resistance as one universally or exclusively valid. I cannot doubt that, in this world of warring light and darkness, physical force may be the instrument and weapon of righteousness, as truly as otherwise; and that he is the man of most efficient wisdom who sees this,—

> "And, if some dreadful need should rise,
> Would strike, and firmly, and one stroke."

Nor do I believe that right should resort to force simply in the defensive. When the issue

is plain and collision inevitable, it matters little whether war begin with Sumter or with Harper's Ferry; and there is an inspiration in seeing right the first to act. Only let men know assuredly that it is right, and not ambitious selfishness, which acts; and let men know assuredly that this principle of non-resistance, if indeed erroneous or partial, is an error which leans to virtue's side, a principle to be applied with ever greater confidence and completeness, as we advance from a condition where physical force has been paramount to a more intellectual civilization, and whose every successful application enlarges the sphere of its own validity and registers a victory of spirit. The great statesmen of our own time who, like John Bright, repudiating, indeed, the notion of "peace at any price," have nevertheless, in each successive emergency, practically taken their stand upon this principle and been willing to abide the appeal to history, have done more than almost any others to advance the cause of political morality and rationality; while they who inveigh against the doctrine loudest are almost always they who need it most. More and more will wise men labor to bring the world to settle its quarrels in the arena of reason, instead of in the arena of war,

and to make great sacrifices for the sake of peace; and more and more will they who stand in the Protestant succession be proud and grateful that, if Martin Luther erred, he erred through devotion to a principle ideally so sublime, and demanding a courage loftier and more heroic than any courage of the battle-field.

It may be thought that I have dwelt upon this subject of Luther's relation to the common people and to the Peasants' War at altogether disproportionate length, in an essay of such narrow limits as the present. It will not be by wisest readers that this will be thought. The man who can turn carelessly from those hundred thousand slaughtered men there in Franconia and Thuringia,—not chiefly bad and worthless men, but wronged and worthy men, down-trodden men, inflamed, how wildly soever, by an idea,*—turn from that spectacle as a

*The peasants' insurrection was not a mere servile revolt, but a real attempt, however misconceived, to form a republican commonwealth. Münzer, the leader of the insurrection, who has been greatly abused by conservative and conventional writers, was unquestionably a sincere enthusiast, actuated by a genuine desire for a better society and a democratic state. His belief that all the faithful had the Holy Spirit within them, and did not need any external rule, much resembles the Quaker's doctrine of the Inner Light. An interesting account has been preserved of an interview between Münzer and one of his associates and Luther. They laid their claims for support before him, and they said that they could prove their inspiration by telling him what then passed through his mind. Luther challenged them to the proof. "You think in your own heart that our doctrine is true," said one of them, impressively. "Get thee behind me, Satan," said

light thing to this question of the Epistle of James or of Jude as a momentous thing, this man, I say, is in a bad and melancholy way. It is not a momentous thing at all, my friend, whether one Jude was an original man or a second-rate man, significant or inconsiderable. But it is a momentous thing that those hundred thousand men, God's children, lie there in their blood. It is a momentous thing that a hundred thousand more may lie down similarly in Russia to-morrow, and another hundred thousand again in Franconia and Thuringia the next day. It is a momentous thing that good men, churchmen as well as others, with these possibilities and judgment-day impending, are callous and indifferent, speculating with zest and relish about probation, purgatory and the New Jerusalem, and with no energetic care that that section of eternity in which we find ourselves to-day be ordered by the laws of righteousness and reason.

Luther, and dismissed them; but he afterward said to his friends, frankly, "They were quite right: that thought crossed my mind about some of their assertions."

XII.

With the criticism of the Socialist, however misdirected, crude, and captious, we cannot help feeling some sort of sympathy; for it springs from a real hatred of injustice and untruth, and an enthusiasm, however thin in many cases and merely blatant, for a rational and human commonwealth. For the criticism of the Romanist, which has been evoked during these Luther days, we can feel only contempt. All of it which has yet been laid upon the table is the criticism of the dilettant, the sorehead, the sophist, the bassoon, or the bigot, never of the discriminating scholar, whose highest duty and whose first desire are ever to present a complex history and a complex truth with scrupulous equity, in what varied ways soever they may militate. Instead of this, the petty tactics of the hustings, the whitewash, the blackmail, the snarl, the innuendo, the mean disparagement, and the special plea! The perfumed Monsignor, as aforesaid, from West End London, goes up and down our land, amazed and shocked that Luther, having once, of his own free will, taken the vows of "poverty, chastity, and obedience," should afterward have deliberately withdrawn from monkery. Albeit

convinced that monkery was wrong and mischievous, and that his own entrance into it was a mistake, nevertheless, says the Spartan Monsignor, he should have respected his vow. "Had such a contract been made with man and then broken, Luther would have been condemned as dishonorable and dishonest; but, as it was with God, man forgives, and would fain exalt the violator to a hero." Fie upon such foolery and fustian! And yet there is no evidence that the super-sensitive conscience of the Monsignor, so distressed by Luther's broken promise, is moved at all by the gross and audacious falsehoods concerning Luther, coming from a hundred holy Roman pulpits in these days, which surely cannot altogether escape the Monsignor's attention, and cannot fail to be known by him for what they are.* Surely so

*To enforce this by illustration is almost a work of supererogation. It is illustrated in every city in the land, on every Sunday, at this time. The city in which I am writing just after the Luther celebrations illustrates it as well as another. Around the corner, one Father Ryan, S.J., highly lauded, devotes a sermon to Luther, preached before a crowd, made much of, reported at great length in the morning newspaper, at greater length than any other Catholic utterance of the day. It dwells, as does our foreign Monsignor, upon Luther's "coarse scurrility" and the absence in him of "everything to be expected in a messenger of truth and charity"; and yet it is itself one unbroken current of vulgar and violent abuse of Luther as a "licentious and utterly unredeemed villain." Of the violence, no matter; but, of the bald and base falsehoods and deceptions, much matter. "There is sometimes a good deal of sentiment and even sympathy thrown around Luther's marriage," observes Father Ryan, S.J., among

painful a stickler for literal exactitude might prove his pain by rebuking these things also, even if without the precedent herein of cardinal and bishop.

The Monsignor's own arraignment of Luther, which certainly has the very cardinal merit of decency, is as comprehensive and comprehensi-

other things. "He has been sometimes held up as a model of domestic virtue. His friend Melanchthon, who knew Luther well, would certainly be amused at this. He knew that Luther's life before his marriage was so openly and grossly immoral that after the marriage he did not do more than hope that this new kind of life would 'make him more decent.'" Now, Father Ryan, S.J., knows very well that Melanchthon never said anything capable of such construction; and he certainly should know that Melanchthon did say, "If it is asserted that there has been anything unbecoming in the affair of Luther's marriage, it is a false slander." Yet this is not the worst. "It is not necessary," says Father Ryan, S.J., "for us to say anything of Luther, the married monk: he tells us himself he was a villain. Writing soon after his marriage to his intimate friend, Spalatinus, Luther says, 'I consider that I have made myself so vile and contemptible by this marriage, that I hope the angels will laugh and the devils weep.'" Now, what is the passage from Luther's letter to Spalatin, from which this priest of the *Society of Jesus* quotes? Here it is: "Pray that God may bless us. In the opinion of some, I have made myself contemptible by this marriage; but, nevertheless, I trust that angels smile and demons weep at what I have done. How inconsistent are those who call that impious and diabolical in me, which in others they pronounce sacred and pious!" Lay beside this the priest's quotation. If the newspaper has wronged the father, we are sorry, and he should have immediately corrected a wrong so great. If the newspaper has reported truly, then we can only rejoice that the children of this world are better than the children of light, that in secular places such proceedings would still cover a man with disgrace, and that it is only in Holy Church that these things are safe, uncensured and condoned. It is one of the unquestionable evils of that freedom of the press, against which the Church has fought so strenuously, that such mischievous misrepresentations are spread broadcast among ignorant people, who never see corrections of them, without censorship and without punishment.

The same carrier brings another illustration, in a broadside upon the

ble a summary of the Church's case in brief as we are likely to get, and touches in some way or other all the counts of the common indictment.

(1) Luther left monkery, to which he had dedicated himself, and married a wife.—This seems to most of us a most commendable and salutary proceeding.

(2) He was coarse, scurrilous, and unchari-

"Causes and Results of Protestantism," in one of the leading Catholic newspapers of the West. The author, the Rev. Father Fairbanks, we read, is the son of a Methodist preacher, was himself, when young, an ardent Methodist, is now just as ardent a Catholic. In personal appearance, we read, "he does not resemble a priest, as he wears a full beard and moustache." His brain, however, has evidently become well metamorphosed, as will appear from the following very bare and meagre statement of his explanation of the "anti-Christian revolt," as he denominates the Reformation. The final cause of the "revolt," we are told naïvely, "is to be found in original sin." Luther living at another time, when even greater abuses existed, could not have kindled a fire. "He would have been as insignificant as thousands of other corrupt disturbers of society who have lived before and since." Abuses flourish in every age. Some periods have been brighter and some darker than the sixteenth century; and in them have been found "evil men of more powerful genius, if not more reckless," than Luther. Luther himself was actuated by no love of liberty or hatred of tyranny, but made use of "the designs of ambitious monarchs in opposing the just authority of Rome," merely to satisfy a feeling of personal revenge and pique. "The occasion of his fall was presented in a wound given to his pride. . . . If the promulgation of the indulgences had been confided to the Augustinian Order, Luther, as its most renowned preacher in Saxony, would, without doubt, have been chosen to publish them. But, contrary to the desire and expectation of the Augustinians, John Tetzel, a learned and distinguished preacher of the Order of St. Dominic, was chosen to perform that important duty. He who would willingly have preached the indulgences now, through envy and revenge, determined to preach against them. Wounded self-love frenzied the would-be matricidal arm to plunge the dagger into his mother's breast. Personal pride and ambition nerved him to raise his impious hand,

table.—But his coarseness was by no means coarser than that of his Catholic antagonists; and the uncharitableness part of it becomes quite invisible and inaudible, beside the tone of Rome. Luther was treated as a "savage beast" and a "wild boar," not by heated disputants, but in formal and deliberate documents promulgated by the papal authority; while the cumulative and succulent fiendishness of the terms of the papal bull of excom-

and the spirit of monkish rivalry in his Order gave energy to his blow." And this passes for history in reputable Catholic quarters! It is because we will not have history taught so that we are to have "a fight" sprung upon us and our public schools blown up! "If Tetzel," continues our simple ex-Methodist with the full beard, "in his ardor of speech, carried the doctrine of indulgences too far and turned it into an abuse, it does not in the least justify Luther in his hot-headed course. The fault should have been referred by him and his Order to the lawful authority (*sic*) for correction. But there is no reliable historical proof for any such supposition." Our Catholic friend is thus quite willing to accept the proceedings against which Luther and Germany rose, as altogether legitimate, orthodox, and in accordance with the Church's standard of virtue. The latter half of his article—there are five long columns of this stuff—is devoted to showing how Luther, once having shipwrecked conscience by this indulgence of spite and ambition, gave himself up to "unrestrained license and unbridled passion." "Wine and women, sensual indulgence, and an obstinate and revengeful pride were the chief motives and end of his life." He quotes many of the utterances of Luther, which have been quoted in their proper relation in this volume, to show the moral disorder which followed the assault upon the old Church; but he fails to see or to say that this was the same disorder as that which accompanied the breaking-up of the Greek and Roman mythology. He makes the most perverse misrepresentations, by garbled quotations and otherwise, in the attempt to identify Luther with doctrines of sexual license. "It would be better to live in concubinage than in chastity," he makes him say, in a manner calculated to convey the identical impression which the passage conveys, thus baldly printed here. What words could be too strong for the expression of the indignation which every honest man should feel at the

munication, not only as it was in Luther's time, but as still in vogue, surpasses everything — as the learned Monsignor certainly would not venture to deny — to which the most pretentious Protestantism ever aspired. "That the Papacy was Antichrist," says one, well putting the antithesis, "became the surest and most vehement of Luther's convictions; and it evoked from him outbursts of Titanic wrath which are

deliberate publication of such passages, thus insulated and misleadingly translated, or at the undertaking to write upon Luther at all by one who had not so far gotten at the spirit of the man as to know that even if such words as these, with such meaning, actually occurred, they must needs occur in a serious connection, demanding commentary and explanation, if to be submitted at all to the mixed masses of men?

I have seen tables of vulgar passages from the Bible and from Shakspere, raked together by lascivious and malevolent moles, for the purpose of proving that those books are demoralizing and not to be put into men's hands. These muck-rakers do not prove Shakspere and the Bible smutty: they simply prove themselves smutty. The well-ventilated vulgarity which is actually scattered in those great pages can be safely left to itself,— never hurt anybody very badly yet,— while the sinister tables damn the man who reads and the man who makes them. No honest man ever read Martin Luther largely yet, vulgarity and all, without finding a soul of rugged, sincere virtue, and getting good and not hurt; while he who burrows in his hundred volumes, the stormy records of a stormy time, for the vile purpose of tabulating vulgarities, is purchasing for himself damnation.

I have referred to the utterances of these two fathers, not because they are singular, but precisely because they are representative. Such is the general method and tone of the Roman Church on these questions, at this time. It may be objected that these words come from obscure men and places. The objection would not be valid. Yet I quote further, from an article in *Month*, the Catholic magazine. "Go to, then, Doctor Martin Luther," concludes the writer of this article, "blasphemer and hypocrite, thou lustful monk and sacrilegious priest, without faith in God or hope in the Redeemer, even in the convent,—take thyself off, begone out of our sight, fly away into space. Papist or Protestant, we will have none of thee;

equalled in the history of mankind only by the fury of the Papacy itself against heretics."

(3) "The oft-time claimed honor of having put the Bible within the reach of the people cannot be given Luther. . . . There were no less than five translations into German before Luther was born, and twelve others before his own appeared." — The tacit acknowledgment that it was an honor to put the Bible within the reach of the people is welcome. But the reference to German translations before Luther's, as entitled to consideration or respect

for, with all our sins and unworthiness, yet are we men, and thou art of the earth earthly, of the flesh fleshly, of the devil devilish." But, the objector may persist, the editor did not write this. Yet he did admit it, and he does not criticise it; and no word of rebuke has come from any man of standing or authority in the Church for passages like this, with which the whole Catholic press of the country teems. And no man of them all seems to perceive the satire of this underrating and abuse of their great opponent, nor what complete disaster would ensue from the single blow of some really able and earnest man, touching some really vulnerable point, if one so weak and vile as Luther, dealing with fictitious and trumped-up abuses, has been able to produce the remarkable results which we see. "The Romanists do but prejudice their own cause," well writes Krauth, "when they undervalue a man who, with nothing but the weapons of the Spirit, shook to its lowest depths the entire Church of the Middle Ages. Every Catholic who claims to be a lover of truth might learn from the word of Stolberg, who, though he deserted Protestantism for the Catholic Church, says: 'Against Luther's person I would not cast a stone. In him, I honor not alone one of the grandest spirits that have ever lived, but a great religiousness also, which never forsook him.'" Our carping, snarling priests might well remember that this has been the tone of all really noble-minded Catholics, from Stolberg and Schlegel to Ignatius Döllinger. And they might also well remember that, in Luther's own time, almost every cultivated man in Germany gave him his sympathy.

from a literary stand-point, or as having any powerful currency among the German people, discredits either the Monsignor's scholarship or his candor. "It is true," says Krauth, "that, beginning with the Gothic translation of Ulfillas, in the fourth century, there had been various translations of the Scriptures into the Germanic tongues. About 1466 appeared the first Bible printed in German. It came from the press of Eggesteyn, in Strasburg,—not, as has been frequently maintained, from the press of Faust and Schöffer in 1462. Between the appearance of this Bible and that of Luther there were issued in the dialect of Upper Germany some fourteen editions of the Bible, besides several in the dialect of Lower Germany. These were, without exception, translations of a translation. They were made from the Vulgate; and, however they may have differed, they had a common character which may be expressed in a word,—they were abominable. In the copy of one of them there is a picture of the Deluge, in which mermaids are floating around the ark, arranging their tresses with the aid of small looking-glasses, with a most amphibious nonchalance. The rendering is about as true to the idea as the picture is to nature. Other editions swarm

with typographical errors,—and the typography is the best part. How Luther raised what seemed a barbarous jargon into a language which, in flexible beauty and power of internal combination, has no parallel but in the Greek, and in massive vigor no superior but the English, writers of every school, Protestant and Romish alike, have loved to tell."

(4) With reference to the corruption of the Catholic Church at the time of Luther's protest, it is true, we are told, that the conduct of many had grown "lax and scandalous." But "a false issue was raised; and Luther, instead of striving to reform manners, strove to reform doctrine. . . . The disciplinary decrees of the Council of Trent show too sadly how fearfully reformation of manners was needed among large numbers of the clergy and laity. But the commandments are none the less true, although we break them. So was it in the fifteenth century. The doctrines of the Church were the same then as now. Men were taught with truth and justice, but many followed it not."—The appeal is to history. It is true enough that the doctrines of the Roman Church are the same now as then. But the doctrines of the Church are not now, as then, the only doctrines, nor indeed the important or control-

ling doctrines, among the world's controlling men or in the world's intelligent society; nor do these doctrines determine the character of the institutions which chiefly determine the morals and social activities of the Church's own members. The man who believes that, had the Church's doctrines and authority maintained undisputed and universal sway through these centuries, with that attitude to politics, science and education, which characterized them in the sixteenth century, believes that the reformed doctrine, the new view of authority and Protestant vigilance have nothing to do, have not indeed almost everything to do, with our better morals and the better morals of Romanism itself, must study history and the times to small purpose.

(5) Luther did not cause the Reformation: he was the mere mouthpiece of a "mighty impulse" and of the "deep, bold thought" which pervaded all Europe. "To attribute to him the intellectual movement of his time and its consequent development is as intelligent as it would be to attribute to the gentle hand which touches the spring, when launching a mighty iron-clad, the invention of the machinery or the force producing the motion."— Thus, willing to say anything that may disparage Luther,

the spokesman of Rome, for the nonce, makes common cause with Buckle and the idolaters of "environment"; and, of course, he simply weakens his own case by doing it,— since, if Luther was not a cause, but the representative and product of a mighty general demand for reformation, this pervasive public feeling clearly sprang from very patent and very flagrant wrongs. Better for the Church the valiant theory of our moustached priest, that Monk Martin was simply mad because he missed the indulgence job in Saxony, and hence the "revolt." True enough it is, of course, that almost all the circumstances of the time were such that only the powerful leader was needed to rouse the powerful revolt. That leader was needed, and in Luther he appeared. Within twenty years, more than half of the population of Germany, following him, had abandoned the Roman Church.

Quite aside from the reference of this point of the Monsignor's to the case of the Roman Church,— to which it really has little reference at all,— the general matter, in its representative capacity, has an interest, although much greater for some minds than others. "There is a dispute," says Phillips Brooks, "as to whether Luther belonged to the Reformation

or the Reformation belonged to Luther,— whether he created the change or led it. It is a useless question. Little, indeed, and very transitory the Reformation would have been, if it could have been any one man's work. The work of one great man cannot be separated from humanity. Luther himself would have been the last to claim that he ever created the Protestant Reformation; but, if any man's personality was ever prominent in any great crisis, it was Luther's."

There is a spirit abroad which loves to slight the great man and the hero, says that everything is to be explained in the lump, and that there is no genius. Luther was nobody; Loyola was nobody; Columbus was nobody; Samuel Adams was nobody; Garrison was nobody; Jesus was nobody. The leviathan, Humanity, had come to a point where it needed a certain service, and used these as its tools,— might have used others as well. It is a theory very flattering to the vanity of mediocrity,— mediocrity both of brains and of virtue. We are as great and good as anybody, only we lack provocation and opportunity. The hero and the genius, friend, create opportunity: every time is great to them. There are no "mute, inglorious Miltons"; and, if you are not the bearer

of some great new truth to men, it is not because God is exhausted. Christianity, you say, would have had no success in the Greece of Pericles nor in the Rome of Brutus,— no demand for a new religion there,— and Jesus would not have been Jesus, but for the discipline and inspiration of the prophets, would have dried up in the dyspeptic agnosticism of a Belgrade parlor and in the atmosphere of the society newspaper. But Nicodemus had the prophets, and every doctor in Jerusalem and Galilee, and nothing adamantine insulated them from the influences of the times and from the vision of God. And the concern of interest in our present case is that Martin Luther is nailing theses there to the church door, while John Tetzel sells indulgences, although he, too, has good chance to see that the Church is corrupt, and that the heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked, sadly needing dews of heavenly grace.

While Luther was certainly affected, as was all Europe, by the various movements of the *Renaissance*, it remains true, as concerns his work in the reformation of religion, that never was so great a work undertaken by one less influenced by previous workers in the same direction. There was nothing that he did which he

might not as well have essayed, and probably would not have essayed, had no man ever spoken against Rome before. His protest was born directly of his personal need of a religion which Rome did not supply, and of his natural horror at the corruptions of the Church. It is true enough that Walther von der Vogelweide had written violent anti-popish poems three hundred years before Luther was born. It is true enough that the work of Wiclif and of Huss had not been without its influence upon the general mind, doing much to make it ready for Luther's more powerful word; but, in the beginning, Wiclif and Huss were but mere names to Luther himself. He was a reformer primarily, because he felt the need of being reformed himself, and not because of the writings of any precedent Englishman or Bohemian.

Afterward, he came to know their writings well and rejoiced to find them — as well as the writings of Wessel, to which he paid special tribute — in the same direction as his own thought. "All that I have thus far taught," he said, at the time of his excommunication, being stigmatized as a fellow-heretic with Huss, "I have learned from John Huss, but without knowing it. John Staupitz has

done the same.* In short, we are all Hussites without being aware of it. The Apostle Paul and Augustine were also Hussites."

(6) Luther's claim, "that reason or private judgment is the final court for deciding the acceptance and signification of revelation," is, we are told, opposed to common sense; for how, it is asked, can such a process secure "that unerring certainty, excluding all doubt, which is necessary" in matters of religion? Reason has a right to examine the credentials of the messenger of revelation; but, being secured as to its authenticity, to assert that reason is its judge is "a cloak for covering the most abject servitude of mind." For "how can liberty of intellect be saved in receiving revelation under a system which puts the mind at the mercy of translators and interpreters of such revelation?" The fruit of such an illogical position is natural and evident, and the Monsignor draws upon eminent Protestant historians to help confirm his facts. Since the first great impulse, "Protestant churches have made no advance and have exercised no perceptible influence." "Whatever is lost by Catholicism is gained by Rationalism."

*If there was one man to whom, more than to any other, far more than to Wiclif and Huss, Luther was indebted for his impulses to the Reformation, that man was the learned and noble Staupitz.

Surely, the most remarkable succotash of Romanism and Evangelicalism, of truth, half-truth, inconsequence and falsehood, that is often encountered in a single paragraph! Of Evangelicalism,—for how often have we heard from that quarter the same dismal story of the capacity and right of reason to examine the credentials of revelation, and its incapacity to judge its substance! That scrofulous thought can well be left to Mr. Munger and the "New Orthodox," who have very neat and sufficient medicine for it. What is this much-talked-of "credential" of revelation, one is tempted to ask ironically, of whose infallible authenticity reason, impotent to know the truth itself as truth and the good as good, may so easily be absolutely sure, and what is the process by which the Monsignor and John Smith attain this absolute sureness, which other minds, almost as bright and presumably as ingenuous, find, on their part, opposed to "common sense"? Being sure of the infallible "credential,"—this is the Roman of it,—even then the individual may not trust his own reading of the revelation, but only some interpretation duly statuted by the infallible "Church." But when and where, our irony yet urges, did the nature of things pronounce a church infalli-

ble? Where is that fructifying decree also recorded? And, if this be a province in which reason may put questions, on what rational ground is it to be expected that a thousand dullards should outrede a seer, their cumulative near-sightedness transcending his intellect and insight,—that God's truth, which Fénelon must speak of under correction, should leap infallibly to answer the narrow majority in a council of jealous, political prelates, or, but half revealed to the soul of Thomas à Kempis, stand clear before the official eye of Pope Roderic Borgia?* The strange and quite incomprehensible inconsequence in the Monsignor's *olla podrida* is the assertion that the right of private judgment is a cloak for mental servitude. The falsehood is the notion that, in matters of religion, "an unerring certainty, excluding all doubt, is necessary." Such certainty is neither necessary nor desirable, either in matters of religion or in any other matters.

*The valorous double-twist by which the Roman Church gets at its comfortable "unerring certainty, excluding all doubt," thinking itself infallible because it has voted itself so, reminds us of the naïve complacency of that probably mythical council of the Saints of Salt Lake, which resolved, according to the old story: (1) That the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; (2) That the Lord hath given the earth to his saints; (3) That we are the saints. "Surely," says Gladstone, in pardonable and even commendable impatience, "in the sonorous pretensions of the Latin controversialists, there is a great deal of what in common affairs would be adjudged to be no better than 'tall talk.'"

Whether necessary or desirable or neither, men's disagreements teach the Monsignor and teach us all that it does not exist, and that the nature of things wills that we shall get on without it. We walk by faith, and not by sight, said the wise man; and so it is doubtless best that we should walk. Not unerring certainty, but the balance of probabilities,— it is upon this that we have to act; and this, indeed, is the very ground of human growth and discipline. A formula from heaven instructing us how to regulate our politics and our economy, so as to save the million souls ground up each year by our folly and our crudity, might be welcome; but it is doubtful whether it would be truly beneficent, and it is sure that we shall never get it. Nor shall we get, nor did men ever, any other formula from heaven.

But there is, in the Monsignor's arraignment, one important truth. The Protestant Church, he tells us,— meaning by it the religious bodies resting on the doctrinal formulas of Luther and his associate reformers,— makes no advance and exercises no deep influence. Whatever is lost by Catholicism is gained by Rationalism. This, I say, is true. By which it is not meant that the Protestant Church — and the same is true, of course, of the Roman Church — does

not exercise a powerful lateral influence, does not do great good in a thousand ways, and remain a medium of inspiration. It is meant that the Protestant formula no longer controls, expresses, incites or satisfies the world's deep and significant intellectual activities, whatever is fresh, sincere, original, great or prophetic in the world's literature, science, art, religion and life, whatever has in it potency, promise and the future. But this does not discredit Protestantism. The *Protestant Church* was a small part of Protestantism. Protestantism was not chiefly a Church, but a new spirit. The Protestant Church is but a moment in that great dialectic by which humanity is passing altogether from the Dispensation of the Church to the DISPENSATION OF THE COMMONWEALTH. The Christian Church in its totality is but a greater moment in the same great process. When Christendom transcended the conception of its Christ as "the only begotten Son of God,"— as, in the minds of its philosophers, it did a century ago,— and clearly grasped the conception, which already hovered before the minds of the earliest apostles, of Christ as "the first-born among many brethren," then the Dispensation of the Church began to die, and the Dispensation of the Commonwealth was born.

Therefore, men are little troubled by any logical dilemma into which Church or churches are crowded. And nothing shall prevent or hinder us from doing hearty justice to that worthier and grander definition of the Church as Church, which Rome, in its ideal, satisfies. For who can well deny that that is the worthier and grander definition of the Church, which views it as internally inspired by the same Holy Ghost, and endowed with the same supernatural powers, which worked at the beginning, — while the Protestant theory, with its insulated and embalmed miracle and inspiration, is arbitrary, mechanical, ignoble and faithless? If, in this present revived controversy between Romanism and Protestantism, men are helped to see this clearly, at least one good purpose will be served; for so they will be helped toward a nobler conception of their own human nature and of history.

XIII.

Protestantism is a spirit, not a church. If Protestantism were a church, then indeed might men say, Roman men and other, that Protestantism had failed or would fail. "If we think of Protestantism," says Phillips Brooks, in the

very thought of Carlyle, "as a power that tried to take the place of Rome and govern mankind in the same cruel fashion,—if for Protestantism to succeed is to bring all men together in loyalty to lengthy creeds,—then certainly Protestantism is a failure. But that Protestantism is not a failure, which, for four centuries, at least, has held the tyranny of Rome in check, and filled the world with so much intelligence and freedom of spirit that, even if Rome should become again the mistress of the world, she could not again be the blind and brutal Rome with which Luther fought. But to have held the power of Rome in check for four centuries would have been a poor recompense. The Protestantism of Luther, Milton, Bunyan, Butler, Wordsworth and Tennyson, Washington and Lincoln, is not a failure. Perhaps a new Luther is needed for the next great step that humanity is to take, but that step is possible mainly because of what Luther did four hundred years ago."

Yet not Romanists only, but preachers of "drowsy inanities, not a few, that call themselves Protestant," will have it that Luther shall stand to us chiefly for a formula and a *cult*,—such creed and scheme and dialect as he uttered himself by in his day. They scoff at him who

speaks of the connection of Luther's protestantism with the protestantism of our day, with modern freedom, rationalism, and democracy,—scoff at Carlyle, when he says that English Puritanism was the second act of it, and the French Revolution the third act. They cannot see that Luther was dynamic: they do not know that it is not what a man is *in esse*, but what he is *in posse*, that counts in this world.* They are only anxious—among Germans, Vilmar and others—to save him from the reputation of a *Revolutionär*. Ah, friend, it is like aping Bradford's archaic speech, and setting æsthetic copies

* "In the truest sense, Luther is the father of modern civilization. He proclaimed that freedom of thought without which it is easy to see that, despite the great modern inventions, the spirit of the Dark Ages must have been indefinitely prolonged. It was the spiritual freedom which Luther asserted that produced political freedom and the freedom of the press. Luther's spirit was to make the invention of Gutenberg the true servant of humanity, and to open to the benign genius of liberty the lands to which Gioja's mariner's compass should point the way.

"Of course, neither in his own life nor in that of those who followed him most closely was the great doctrine of liberty, for which his name stands, fully developed, nor has that doctrine yet regenerated human society. Indeed, much that is strictly Lutheran, in the sense of necessary consequence of his great doctrine, is not to be found in his works, and would have been personally repudiated by him. But it is his, nevertheless, as the free political development of England and America is the result of Puritanism, however different its aspect may be from that of the Puritan Commonwealth, and however sternly the Puritan may have denounced it. Out of strength comes forth sweetness. Out of Luther came forth John Woolman and Channing, and those also at whom Woolman and Channing would look in wonder and even with apprehension.

"The lesson of Luther's birthday is not only that the individual conscience alone reveals the truth and the way to the sincere soul, but that the

of Brewster's chair beside your umbrella-stand, hoping so to make yourself a Puritan. The Governor's and Elder's ghosts shall scare you in your dreams! There was a General Synod the other week, which instructed all its clergy to preach upon Luther, on his birthday, in grateful recollection of his doctrines of imputed righteousness and of the Bible as an infallible rule of faith. Had they said that simple word of Herder's, "Let us remember Luther's method of thought, his plain hints and his strong truths, and let us apply them to our own times!" what man in this Emerson's America or in Adam's

man who has the courage to hold to it firmly will be at last recognized and honored. It is the oldest of sayings that a prophet is not honored in his own country, and that we do not recognize the angels with whom we live. Many a 'solid man of Boston' glorifies the memory of Sam Adams, who, had he lived in Sam Adams' day, would have thought him a pestilent fellow, and who look askance upon the Sam Adamses of their own day. It may be wisely remembered by the respectable and dominant opinion which delights to pay homage to Luther that the same respectable and dominant opinion of his own time hated and hunted him. The tale is forever repeated. The other day at a public dinner in Boston, the Lord Chief Justice of England, who would be heard nowhere more respectfully than in Boston, mentioned several distinguished men of that city and neighborhood, but the four that he first named together were Benjamin Franklin and Daniel Webster and Joseph Story and Theodore Parker. But how long is it since, to many of the eminent citizens who applauded Lord Coleridge Theodore Parker was abhorrent as dangerous both to Church and State? . . ' And so, extolling the brave, humane, indomitable, and unquailing Luther, the truest commemorative service, when the sermon is spoken and the oration is delivered and the festivities have ceased, will be to recognize and sustain the Luthers of to-day, the men who are working in his spirit, and who, amid the bitterest hostility and the most contemptuous ridicule, follow the voice that speaks in their own consciences."— *George William Curtis.*

race would have divined that those doctrines were what were meant to be remembered?

Perhaps a new Luther is needed for the next great step! If he should come, with the old Luther's method of thought, and apply it to our own times, his hammer would ring upon the doors of the churches calling themselves Lutheran and Protestant, just as the old Luther's hammer rang at Wittenberg. He would pick up the Catechism of this Church, the Prayer-Book of this other: — These are your Articles of Religion. But confessedly you do not believe this Thirteenth Article, nor this Eighteenth, nor this other. You do not believe that Marcus is damned; and you had that Hindu preaching gospel to you. — Ah, but, dear Luther, these articles are no longer official and authoritative standards: we bind them into our Prayer-Book now only because they have historical interest. — That does not appear. If it be so, then you deceive the people and wittingly encourage false doctrine. I nail this thesis to your door: *A Church shall say what it means, and not deceive the people.* You compel this man to declare, in being ordained to your ministry, that he believes "all the Canonical Scriptures." It is a simple word. No person without ulterior ends ever found but

one meaning in it,— and that not disbelief in the stories of Genesis and Exodus and Joshua and Jonah and immaculate conceptions, which you are trying to bring your people to look at rationally. Yet, knowing that an attempt to change it to a formula clearly expressing the view of scholars would split your Church asunder, you encourage men, holding the modern view of the Hebrew Scriptures, to take the vow with mental reservation and silent postscripts. I nail this thesis to your door: *A Church shall not encourage compromise nor equivocation in its teachers.* You pray to "Holy Trinity, Three Persons and One God." But no sincere man ever yet chose to speak so, when he really felt himself in the presence of High Heaven, and was not trying instead, under the pretext of prayer, to reinforce a creed. This is trifling profanity, not prayer. I nail this thesis to your door: *A Church shall speak in the words of nature and simplicity.* You pray to be delivered from "everlasting damnation," and preach "eternal hope." You pray to Christ as having made, "by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full satisfaction for the sins of the whole world," and straightway mount your pulpit to denounce the "substitutional theory," as you call it. You rattle through your creed;

and yet you tell me that you are not sure at all that Christ was "born of a virgin," or that he "rose from the dead," speaking after the manner of men, but think these may be fond myths, rooted in some great spiritual facts. At most, you only sometimes believe that you believe them. Ah, says the prophet, "only in the world's last lethargy can such things be done, and accounted safe and pious. It is not now known that religion is not a doubt; that it is a certainty, or else a mockery and horror. That none or all of the many things we are in doubt about and need to have demonstrated and rendered probable can by any alchemy be made a 'religion' for us, but are and must continue a baleful, quiet or unquiet, hypocrisy for us; and bring — *salvation* do we fancy? I think it is another thing they will bring, and are, on all hands, visibly bringing, this good while!" You are content to exclude and excommunicate the man who believes the great spiritual fact; you fear and dandle the man who believes that he believes the myth. On all these things, I have indignant theses. You say you make these compromises and do all these things which do not satisfy you, but which trouble you, for the sake of being useful. Do you know, friend, no other way of being useful, no truthful way, only

one way? Ah, how poorly you have apprehended the infiniteness of life and the riches of God's armory! Think on these things. And to your door I nail this thesis: *It is not necessary that any man be useful, but it is necessary that every man be righteous.* So this new Luther would say.

Shall we keep waiting for this new Luther, as the Jews still waited for Elias, while John Baptist was thundering in their ears? "If you had but eyes to see," said Jesus, "this is Elias." And it may be that, while men wait for the new Luther, his voice is already ringing in their ears; and they are only querying, like Eck and Emser and Cajetan, how they may disparage and rebut his word. I think he spoke in Lessing, I think he spoke in Kant, I think he spoke in Emerson and Parker and Carlyle. Let us not wait for great new Luthers. Let us each, great or small, do his own part in his own place, in Luther's spirit. Every man is great enough to be heroic and to be true; every man can possess himself of Luther's method, and apply it faithfully to his own time.

The slight regard men show for awful credal obligations is telling with a subtle power upon our whole society. When diplomacy stands at the altar, what shall be expected in the market-

place? And who would venture to deny that subterfuges and such constructions of religious obligations are common in our churches as, transferred to business dealings, would drive men in disgrace from the Exchange? It is a startling fact, that the principals in so many of the notorious embezzlements of our time, from Glasgow to Fall River and Wall Street and on to San Francisco, have been men of high place in the churches, all the time duly and fluently repeating profound professions of belief on points concerning which it is impossible that many should have clear understanding or genuine conviction at all. I sat in such a church yesterday, and the preacher said to the great mixed congregation: "We will rise as is our wont, and say the Creed. Those of you who are not familiar with it will find it pasted to the cover of the hymn-book, and can read it." I shuddered for that people.

Men think the knot may be untied by a "New Orthodoxy." We hear much of the "New Orthodoxy." The doom is in the name. New souls are what we want,—truth in the first place, and not in the second. Nothing becomes an "orthodoxy," new or old, unless it be already half-sister to decay. There is no orthodoxy; and he only first begins to think rightly,

who ceases to desire or need one, and who truly feels the force of that word of Hegel's, *Becoming*, and that yet greater word of Heraclitus', *All things are fluid*, all a process,— πάντα ῥεῖ. No revival, whether of Gothic Architecture or Greek Fathers, is good for much, if it be a mere revival and made an end in itself, and be not viewed as a moment in advance and in a larger synthesis.

Each reformation has in it much the same elements and types as others. A study of reformation in the sixteenth century is a study of reformation in the nineteenth. Luther, too, had to deal with New Orthodoxy, and find how ineffectual it was for the great task set for the time. The characters of Luther and Erasmus exhibit in better contrast, perhaps, than is found anywhere else in history, the two types of progressive men brought to the front by every great reform,— the genial, cultivated man, as cognizant as the other of the vice and falsehood of the old, and disposed to help on the new as fast and as far as it may be done without occasioning commotion or drawing opprobrium to himself; and the simple, earnest man, who grasps the new with intense conviction, and preaches it with outspoken fearlessness and faith, be the commotion what it may

and come whatever consequences to himself. "On one side," says Mr. Froude, in his noble essay on the times of Erasmus and Luther, "there are the large-minded latitudinarian philosophers,— men who have no confidence in the people,— who have no passionate convictions; moderate men, tolerant men, who trust to education, to general progress in knowledge and civilization, to forbearance, to endurance, to time,— men who believe that all wholesome reforms proceed downwards from the educated to the multitudes; who regard with contempt, qualified by terror, appeals to the popular conscience or to popular intelligence. Opposite to these are the men of faith — and by faith I do not mean belief in dogmas, but belief in goodness, belief in justice, in righteousness, above all belief in truth. Men of faith consider conscience of more importance than knowledge, or rather as a first condition, without which all the knowledge in the world is of no use to a man, if he wishes to be indeed a man in any high and noble sense of the word. They are not contented with looking for what may be useful or pleasant to themselves: they look by quite other methods for what is honorable, for what is good, for what is just. They believe that, if they can find out that, then at all hazards and in

spite of all present consequences to themselves that is to be preferred. . . . When the air is heavy with imposture, and men live only to make money, and the service of God has become a thing of words and ceremonies, and all that is high and pure in man is smothered, the fire bursts out in these higher natures with a fierceness which cannot be controlled; and, confident in truth and right, they call fearlessly on the seven thousand in Israel who have not bowed the knee to Baal to rise and stand by them. They do not ask whether those whom they address have wide knowledge of history or science or philosophy: they ask rather that they shall be honest, that they shall be brave, that they shall be true to the common light which God has given to all his children. They know well that conscience is no exceptional privilege of the great or the cultivated, that to be generous and unselfish is no prerogative of rank or intellect. Erasmus considered that, for the vulgar, a lie might be as good as truth, and often better. A lie, ascertained to be a lie, to Luther was deadly poison,— poison to him, and poison to all who meddled with it. In his own genuine greatness, he was too humble to draw insolent distinctions in his own favor, or to believe that any one class on earth is of more im-

portance than another in the eyes of the Great Maker of them all. . . . To Erasmus, truth was not the first necessity. He would prefer truth, if he could have it. If not, he could get on moderately well upon falsehood. Luther could not."

In his own heart, Erasmus welcomed Luther; and he applauded him just as long and as far as it was comfortable. "Luther is like Erasmus," said the Heidelberg critics, at the time of the Diet of Worms, "except that he openly professes what Erasmus is satisfied with insinuating." "Luther," said Erasmus, in the beginning, "has taken up the cause of honesty and good sense against abominations. . . . The theologians do not try to answer him. They do but raise an insane and senseless clamor, and shriek and curse. Heresy, heretic, heresiarch, schismatic, antichrist,—these are the words which are in the mouths of all of them; and, of course, they condemn without reading. I warned them what they were doing. I told them to scream less, and to think more."

But, when the real struggle came, Erasmus was good for nothing, and worse than good for nothing,—a clog upon the wheels of progress. Erasmus means *amiable*. Desiderius Erasmus is the whole name,—he bestowed it upon him-

self. Each word is *amiable*, Latin and Greek alike. *Amiable, amiable!* But the time was quite past for amiable men. Erasmus was as obsolete, when Luther's hammer rang upon the church door at Wittenberg, as Falkland, when the time had come for Milton, Vane and Cromwell. "Let others affect martyrdom," he said. "I have no inclination to risk my life for truth." No disposition to a trip to Worms, on his part! "Men should not attempt everything at once," he said, "but rather step by step." Ah, dear, moderate man, the generation had passed in which men were to be saved by taste and elegant Latinity, and you shall straightway be buried under very inelegant but perfectly intelligible pamphlets by Martin Luther. Martin is another form, they tell us, of Mars, the god of war; and Luther means *a people's courage* or *a people's sword*,— or, more likely, as others say, *pure*, the same as the word *lauter*. The gods do seem sometimes to preside at christenings. "The wisdom that is from above is *first* pure, and then — amiable," says the inspired text; and this is never so true as in great times of reformation. A little divine cleaving and piercing, — war, not amiability,— that was the thing wanted then and there; the sword of the spirit, not the spirit in the form of a dove. Doves again by and by.

"Once sure that the doctrine we teach is God's Word," said Luther, "once certain of this, we may build thereupon, and know that this cause shall and must remain." No disorder need disturb us; nor are the immediate fortunes of the cultures and amenities of much account. It is of the nature of all great new truth that, in its own way, it brings not peace, but a sword. It brings moral disorder often to him whose old formula it drives out. Let us not, therefore, say that truth is immoral; let us not, therefore, teach untruth. In the years, — no matter about the days, — untruth alone is immoral; and that is immoral and paralyzing, both to him who takes and him who gives it. There is a bad spirit and there is a good spirit, in which truth may be asserted and the false denied, — the spirit of Mephistopheles and the spirit of Luther; but untruth can be taught in no good and strong spirit, and to no good end.

To the young men and women of the land, — our country, which for the coming time has need of the most stalwart manhood and womanhood we can cultivate, — to you especially, my brothers and sisters, this word is committed, in the hope that it may strengthen the resolve in some, that in religion their communication

shall be Yea and Nay. Whether Yea or Nay does not matter,— Nay to each false thing proposed to you, Yea to each true thing. You shall find the resolute and constant Nay to the false thing the sure way, and the only one, to the firm Yea of real conviction and the peace which passeth understanding. So it was with Luther. The last word of the great Protestant was a great affirmation. "Do you die," they asked him, after their manner, "firmly professing the faith you have taught?" He looked for a moment on them, and summoned the last strength for the one word, with joyful emphasis, "Yes!" Had they said, Do you not believe the old doctrine again? Do you not repent your work against the Church? it would have been, with the same emphasis, No! Protest and faith were to him the same: the Everlasting No was one with the Everlasting Yea.

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